

# SMITH'S

AUG. 1921  
10 CENTS

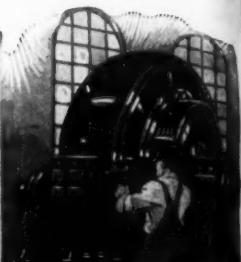
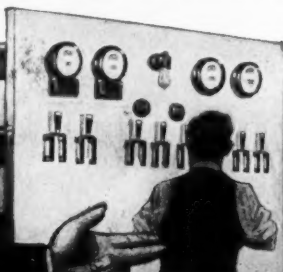
MAGAZINE



*Best Stories of the Month*



# Be a Certificated ELECTRICAL EXPERT



**I WILL TRAIN YOU AT HOME**

**Electrical Experts Earn \$12 to \$30 a Day**  
**WHAT'S YOUR FUTURE**

Trained "Electrical Experts" are in great demand at the highest salaries, and the opportunities for advancement and a Big success in this line are the greatest ever known.

"Electrical Experts" earn \$70 to \$200 a week. Fit yourself for one of these big paying positions—

**Be An "Electrical Expert"**

Today even the ordinary electrician—the "screw driver" kind—is making money—big money. But it's the trained man—the man who knows the whys and wherefores of Electricity—the "Electrical Expert"—who is picked out to "boss" ordinary electricians—to boss the big jobs—the jobs that pay—

**\$3,500 to \$10,000 a Year**

Get in line for one of these "Big Jobs," by enrolling now for my easily-learned, quickly-grasped, right-up-to-the-minute, Spare-Time Home Study Course in Practical Electricity.

**Age or Lack of Experience No Draw-Back**

You don't have to be a College Man; you don't have to be a High School graduate. My Course in Electricity is the most simple, thorough, and successful in existence and offers every man, regardless of age, education, or previous experience, the chance to become in a very short time, an "Electrical Expert," able to make from \$70 to \$200 a week.

**I Give You a Real Training**

As Chief Engineer of the Chicago Engineering Works I know exactly the kind of training a man needs to get the best positions at the highest salaries. Hundreds of my students are now earning \$3,500 to \$10,000. Many are now successful ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS.

**Your Success Guaranteed**

So sure am I that you can learn electricity—so sure am I that after studying with me, you too can get into the "big money" class in electrical work, that I will guarantee under Bond to return every single penny paid me in tuition if, when you have finished my Course, you are not satisfied it was the best investment you ever made.

**Free—Electrical Working Outfits—Free**

L. L. COOKE,  
Chief Eng.  
Chicago Engineering Works,  
Dept. 438,  
1918 Sunnyside Ave.,  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir: Send at once Sample Lessons, your Big Book, and full particulars of your Free Outfit and Home Study Course—all fully prepaid, without obligation on my part.

I give each student a Splendid Outfit of Electrical Tools, Materials and Measuring Instruments absolutely FREE. I also supply them with Drawing Outfit, examination paper, and many other things that other schools don't furnish. You do PRACTICAL work—AT HOME. You start right in after the first few lessons to WORK AT YOUR PROFESSION in a practical way.

**Save \$45.50 By Enrolling Now**

You can save \$45.50 in tuition by enrolling now. Let me send you full particulars of my great Special Offer, and my Free booklet on "How to Become an Electrical Expert."

L. L. COOKE, Chief Engineer

**CHICAGO ENGINEERING WORKS**

Dept. 438

1918 Sunnyside Ave.,

Chicago

Name.....  
Age.....  
Address.....

TO  
Save  
\$

**Was  
\$ 100**

**Now  
\$ 64**

**A Finer Typewriter  
at a Fair Price**

**Over 900,000 Sold**



**Pre-War Price  
\$100  
Now \$36 Less**

## Send No Money

We ship direct to you. No money down—no bothersome red tape. Try the Oliver Nine at our expense. If you decide to keep it, send us only \$4 per month. If you return it, we even refund the outgoing shipping charges. You are not placed under the slightest obligation. That's our whole plan. We rely on your judgment.

### Save \$36

Be your own salesman and save \$36. You get the identical typewriter formerly priced \$100—not a cent's alteration in value. The finest, the most expensive, the latest Oliver Model. Old methods were wasteful. During the war we learned that it was unnecessary to have great numbers of traveling salesmen and numerous, expensive branch houses throughout the country. We were also able to discontinue many such other superfluous, costly sales methods. As a result you save \$36.

In these days when the cost of everything is higher than before the war, it is a distinct contribution to business economy through more direct selling methods to offer such a great and decided saving on so popular a typewriter as the Oliver.

### Over 900,000 sold

If any typewriter is worth \$100, it is this splendid model. It is the same machine used by great concerns such as United States Steel Corporation, National Cloak & Suit Company, National City Bank of New York, Diamond Match Company, Morris & Company and others of like prominence.

And this machine you now get for \$64, payable at the easy rate of \$4 a month.

Avoid disappointment—order now to secure immediate delivery.

**Canadian Price, \$82**

### Not a penny down

Read the coupon. Note that ours is a real free trial offer. No cost or obligation to you. Everything is at our risk and expense.

The coupon is all you need send to get the Oliver for free trial. Mail it today.

If you wish further information before ordering, mark the coupon for your catalog, describing the Oliver in detail. With the catalog we will also send you our amazing book entitled, "The High Cost of Typewriters—The Reason and the Remedy."

**The OLIVER**  
Typewriter Company

738 Oliver Typewriter Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

#### THE OLIVER TYPEWRITER CO., 738 Oliver Typewriter Bldg., Chicago

☐ Ship me a new Oliver Nine for five days free inspection. If I keep it, I will pay \$64 at the rate of \$4 per month. The title to remain in you until fully paid for.

☐ My shipping point is..... This does not place me under any obligation to buy. If I choose to return the Oliver, I will ship it back at your expense at the end of five days.

☐ Do not send a machine until I order it. Mail me your book—"The High Cost of Typewriters—The Reason and the Remedy," your deluxe catalog and further information.

Name.....

Street Address.....

City..... State.....

Occupation or Business.....

**The  
Coupon  
Saves You  
\$36**

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

Vol. XXXIII

# SMITH'S MAGAZINE

No. 4

## CONTENTS

FOR - - AUGUST - - 1921

Cover Design . . . . .	Northam Gould	
Unexplained—Novelette . . . . .	Frances E. Gale . . . . .	481
Illustrated by E. J. Dinsmore.		
The Chameleon—Short Story . . . . .	Marguerite Aspinwall . . . . .	505
Illustrated by Clarence Rowe.		
Conn of the Coral Seas—Serial . . . . .	Beatrice Grimshaw . . . . .	519
Illustrated by Robert A. Graef.		
The Well Beloved—Short Story . . . . .	Arthur Tuckerman . . . . .	554
Illustrated by T. Victor Hall.		
Love and Time—Verse . . . . .	Clinton Scollard . . . . .	560
New York Stage Successes:		
“Deburau”—Poetic Drama . . . . .	Sacha Guitry . . . . .	561
Illustrated with Photographs.		
Freedom—Short Story . . . . .	William Almon Wolff . . . . .	579
Illustrated by E. C. Caswell.		
In an Old Orchard—Verse . . . . .	Jeannie Pendleton Hall . . . . .	589
Mood—Verse . . . . .	Adele L. De Leeuw . . . . .	590
Plans—Verse . . . . .	Grace Hazard Conkling . . . . .	590
While Love Was Yet Before Us—Verse . . . . .	Helen Frazee-Bower . . . . .	590
The Artistic Temper—Short Story . . . . .	Louis Weadock . . . . .	591
Illustrated by Lul Trugo.		
The Hope That Failed—Short Story . . . . .	Garrard Harris . . . . .	601
Illustrated by H. T. Denison.		
The Crooked Average—Short Story . . . . .	Heather Benjamin . . . . .	609
Illustrated by T. Victor Hall.		
Mr. Essington at Large—Serial . . . . .	J. Storer Clouston . . . . .	613
Illustrated by R. Van Buren.		
The Neck: How to Beautify It . . . . .	Doctor Lillian Whitney . . . . .	636

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$2.00

SINGLE COPIES 20 CENTS

Monthly publication issued by SMITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City.  
 OAMOND G. SMITH, President, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City; GEORGE C. SMITH, Treasurer, 79 Seventh Avenue,  
 New York City; GEORGE C. SMITH, JR., Secretary, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City. Copyright, 1921, by SMITH  
 PUBLISHING HOUSE, in the United States and Great Britain. All rights reserved. Publishers everywhere are cautioned  
 against using any of the contents of this magazine either wholly or in part. Entered as Second-class Matter, August  
 30, 1906, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. Canadian subscription, \$2.50.  
 Foreign, \$2.75.

WARNING—Do not subscribe through agents unknown to you. Complaints are daily made by persons thus victimized.  
 IMPORTANT—Authors, agents, and publishers are requested to note that this firm does not hold itself responsible for loss of unsolicited  
 manuscripts while at this office or in transit; and that it cannot undertake to hold unclaimed-for manuscripts for a longer period than six  
 months. If the return of manuscript is expected, postage should be inclosed.





**"Holds Like Daddy's"**

Not only that, but the Baby's garter is made with the same care and of the same quality as Daddy's.

**The Baby Midget**



**Velvet Grip**

**Hose Supporter**

Has taken the place of all make-shifts ever known for holding up baby's tiny socks—equipped with that unique feature found only on Velvet Grip Hose Supporters for "grown-ups"—namely the **All-Rubber Oblong Button**

Sold everywhere or sent postpaid  
Lisle 12 cents : Silk 18 cents

**George Frost Company**

534 Tremont St., Boston

Makers of the famous

Boston Garter for Men

"Sew-Ons" for Women

"Pin-Ons" for Children



## "We Pay Him \$100 a Week!"

"I decided six months ago that we needed a new manager. At that time Gordon, there, was one of the youngest men in the office and was pegging away at a small job.

"I brought him into the office one day and started to draw him out. What do you suppose I discovered? For more than two years he had been studying with the International Correspondence Schools at Scranton. In actual knowledge and training he was years ahead of any man in the office.

"So I gave him the job. We pay him \$100 a week. It's the best investment the house ever made."

How do you stand when your employer checks up his men for promotion? Is there any reason why he should select you?

Ask yourself these questions fairly. You must face them if you expect advancement and more money. For now, more than ever, the big jobs are going to men with special training.

You can get the training you need right at home in spare time. For thirty years the International Correspondence Schools have been helping men to win advancement, to have happy, prosperous homes, to know the joy of getting ahead in business and in life.

Let us prove what we can do for you! Without cost, without obligating yourself in any way, mark and mail this coupon. Today is best!

## INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS BOX 3461-B SCRANTON, PA.

Explain, without obligating me, how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject, before which I mark X.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ELECTRICAL ENGINEER        | <input type="checkbox"/> BOOKKEEPER              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Lighting and Rwy. | <input type="checkbox"/> Stenographer and Typist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telegraph Engineer         | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Secretary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Work             | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Correspondent  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MECHANICAL ENGINEER        | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Draftsman       | <input type="checkbox"/> Cert. Public Accountant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Machine Shop Practice      | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Accountant      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toolmaker                  | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVERTISING             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gas Engine Operating       | <input type="checkbox"/> Window Trimmer          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL ENGINEER             | <input type="checkbox"/> Show Card and Sign Fig. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying and Mapping      | <input type="checkbox"/> SALESMANSHIP            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MINE FOREMAN OR ENGINEER   | <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL SERVICE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STATIONARY ENGINEER        | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Mail Clerk      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marine Engineer            | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ship Draftsman             | <input type="checkbox"/> Poultry Raising         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECT                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Railroad Position.      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contractor and Builder     | <input type="checkbox"/> BUSINESS MANAGEMENT     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Draftsman    | <input type="checkbox"/> TRAFFIC MANAGER         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Builder           | <input type="checkbox"/> AUTOMOBILES             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Engineer        | <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD ENGLISH            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLUMBING AND HEATING       | <input type="checkbox"/> Common School Subjects  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sheet Metal Worker         | <input type="checkbox"/> ILLUSTRATING            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Textile Overseer or Supt.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cartooning              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHEMIST                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Navigation              |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish Teacher         |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Banking                 |

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Business \_\_\_\_\_  
 Present \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 and No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Canadians may send this coupon to International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Limited, Montreal, Canada



YOU CAN DO IT IF YOU USE

# WHITING-ADAMS BRUSHES

Send for Illustrated Literature

**JOHN L. WHITING-J. J. ADAMS CO.**  
**Boston, U.S.A.**

Brush Manufacturers for Over 125 Years and the  
 Largest in the World

# Classified Advertising

## Agents and Help Wanted

**WE START YOU IN BUSINESS**, furnishing everything; men and women \$50 to \$100 weekly operating our "Specialty Candy Factories" anywhere. Booklet free. Hagardor Co., Box 98, East Orange, N. J.

**BE A DETECTIVE**. Excellent opportunity, good pay, travel. Write C. T. Ludwig, 436 Westover Building, Kansas City, Mo.

**MEN**—Age 17 to 55. Experience unnecessary. Travel; make secret investigations, reports. Salaries; expenses. American Foreign Detective Agency, 114, St. Louis.

**TIRE AGENTS**. Exclusive representatives to use and sell the new Mellinger Extra-Ply Tires. (No seconds.) Guarantee Bond \$,000 Miles. Wholesale Prices. Sample sections furnished. Mellinger Tire Co., 976 Oak, Kansas City, Missouri.

**RAILWAY TRAFFIC INSPECTORS** earn from \$110 to \$200 per month and expenses. Travel if desired. Unlimited advancement. No age limit. We train you. Positions furnished under guarantee. Write for Booklet T.M. 25, Standard Business Training Institute, Buffalo, N. Y.

**\$10.00 WORTH** of finest toilet soaps, perfumes, toilet waters, spices, etc., absolutely free to agents on refund plan. Lacassian Co., Dept. 127, St. Louis, Mo.

**MEN WANTED** for Detective Work. Experience unnecessary. Write J. Ganor, former U. S. Gov't Detective, 120, St. Louis.

**DETECTIVES EARN BIG MONEY**. Travel. Great Demand. Fascinating work. Experience unnecessary. Particulars free. Write, American Detective System, 1968 Broadway, N. Y.

**AGENTS**, \$60 to \$200 a Week. Free Samples. Gold Sign Letters for Store and Office windows. Any one can do it. Big demand. Liberal offer to general agents. Metalite Letter Co., 4917 N. Clark Street, Chicago.

**AGENTS**—Our soap and toilet article plan is a wonder; get our free sample case offer. Ho-Ro-Co., 140 Locust, St. Louis.

**SPLENDID CLERICAL WORK** opportunity. Spare or whole time. No canvassing, good money. Chautauqua Business Builders, Jamestown, N. Y.

**AGENTS**—200% profit. Wonderful little article; something new; sells like wildfire; carry in pocket; write at once for Free Sample. Albert Mills, Gen. Mgr., 4886 American Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio.

**MEN—BOYS WANTED**. Railway Mail Clerks. \$135 month. Write immediately. Franklin Institute, Dept. M2, Rochester, N. Y.

**ALCOHOL** book explaining processes of mashing, fermenting, distillation, with Government regulations, \$3.00 C. O. D. DeVol & Co., Barker Bldg., Omaha, Nebr.

## Help Wanted—Female

**WOMEN**—Be Dress Designers, \$35 week. Learn while earning. Sample lessons free. Franklin Institute, Dept. M560, Rochester, N. Y.

**\$6—\$18** a dozen decorating pillow tops at home, experience unnecessary, particulars for stamp. Tapestry Paint Co., 110 LaGrange, Ind.

## Wanted to Buy

**ATTENTION!** Full value positively paid for old Jewelry, Watches, Diamonds, Gold Crowns and Bases, Silver, Platinum and Magnetic points, also Old False Teeth. We hold packages 4 to 12 days and return them at our expense if our offer is not satisfactory. We give our customers a square deal. Send by mail or express. United States Smelting Works (The Old Reliable), Dept. 65, Chicago, Ill.

## Farm Lands

**BUY LAND NOW**. Easy to get your own farm. Write for Free booklet about choice Michigan farm lands. Swigart, X-1265, First National Bank Building, Chicago, Ill.

## Short Stories and Photoplays

**WRITE NEWS ITEMS** and Short Stories for pay in spare time. Copyright Room, and plans, Press Reporting Syndicate (406), St. Louis, Mo.

**WRITE PHOTOPLAYS**: \$25—\$200 paid any one for suitable ideas. Experience unnecessary; complete outline Free. Products League, 439 St. Louis.

**FREE** to writers—A wonderful little book of money-making hints, suggestions, ideas; the A B C of successful Story and Movie writing. Absolutely Free. Just address Authors' Press, Dept. 89, Auburn, N. Y.

**WRITERS'** Stories, Poems, Plays, etc., are wanted for publication. Literary Bureau, 175, Hannibal, Mo.

**PHOTOPLAYS WANTED** for California Producers. Also Stories, Articles, for publication. Criticism free; sell on Commission. Experience unnecessary—Plot Chart Free. Submit Manuscripts or write, Harvard Company, 460, San Francisco.

**AMBITIOUS WRITERS** send today for Free Copy, America's leading magazine for writers of Photoplays, Stories, Poems, Songs. Instructive, helpful. Writer's Digest, 605 Butler Bldg., Cincinnati.

**CAN'T SELL** your photoplays? Valuable service given. Photoplay Service, Box 117, Hermantown Road, Duluth, Minn.

**PHOTOPLAYS** wanted. Big prices paid. Great demand. We show you how. Get free particulars. Rex Publishers, Box 175—F 25, Chicago.

**\$50—\$100** weekly writing Moving Picture Plays. Get free book; valuable information; prices offered. Photo Playwright College, Box 278 X 20, Chicago.

## Patents and Lawyers

**INVENTORS** desiring to secure patents should write for our guide-book "How to Get Your Patent." Send sketch or description for our opinion of its patentable nature. Randolph & Co., Dept. 412, Washington, D. C.

**PATENTS**. Write for Evidence of Conception Blank and free guide book. Send model or sketch and description for free opinion of its patentable nature. Highest References. Prompt Attention. Reasonable Terms. Victor J. Evans & Co., 767 Ninth, Washington, D. C.

**PATENTS**. Highest references. Rates reasonable. Best results. Promptness assured. Booklet free. Watson E. Coleman, Patent Lawyer, 624 F Street, Washington, D. C.

**PATENTS**—Send for free book. Contains valuable information for inventors. Send sketch of your invention for Free Opinion of its patentable nature. Prompt service. Twenty years' experience. Talbert & Talbert, 429 Taylor Bldg., Washington, D. C.

**PATENTS**. Trademark. Copyright. foremost word free. Correspondence solicited. Results secured. Charges reasonable. Write Metzger, Washington.

## Automobiles

**AUTOMOBILE OWNERS**, Garagesmen, Mechanics, Repairmen, send for free copy of our current issue. It contains helpful, instructive information on overhauling, ignition troubles, wiring, carburetors, storage batteries, etc. Over 120 pages, illustrated. Send for free copy today. Automobile Digest, 530 Butler Bldg., Cincinnati.

**GORDON AUTO BED**, \$11.50 Prepaid. Any five passenger car. Carl Crawford, 322 Peyton Bldg., Spokane, Washington.

## Songs, Poems, etc.

**YOU** Write the Words for a Song. We compose the music, free and publish. Send Song-Poem today. B. Lenox Co., W. 123th St., New York.

**WRITE A SONG POEM**. Love, Mirth, Home, Comic or any subject. I compose music and guarantee publication. Words-to-day, Edward Trent, 625 Dearborn, Chicago.

**WRITE THE WORDS** for a Song. We will write the music and guarantee publication on a royalty basis. Submit poem on any subject. Seton Music Company, S. Michigan Ave., Room 100, Chicago.

**YOU WRITE WORDS** for a Song. We write the music, publish and secure copyright. Submit poems on any subject. The Metropolitan Studios, 914 S. Michigan Ave., Dept. 210, Chicago, Illinois.

**HAVE YOU SONG POEMS?** I have best proposition. Ray Hiebeler, D102, Dickens Ave., Chicago.

**SONGWRITERS!** Learn of the present demand for songs suitable for dancing. The opportunities greatly changed compared with former times. Obtainable only in Songwriters' Manual (free) sent today. Submit your ideas for songs at once for criticism and advice. We revise poems, compose music, secure copyright and furnish free publication or outright sale of songs. Musicbocker Studios, 304 Galety Bldg., New York.

**DO YOU WANT YOUR SONG POEM accepted?** Send them today for best immediate publication and free examination. Song writing booklet on request. Authors & Composers Service Co., 602, 1493 Broadway, New York.

## Mail Order Business

**I MADE \$25,000** with small Mail Order Business. Sample article 25c. Booklet. Stamp. Ask Scott, Chicago.

## Personal

**DO YOU** want success? To win friends and be happy? Wonderful results. Personal and Personality Clutch for Birthdate. Thomson-Heywood, 300 Circle Bldg., San Francisco.

**ASTROLOGY**—Stars tell life's future. Send birth date and time for trial report. Eldy, Westport Station, Kansas City, Mo., Suite 74.

**LADIES**—Use Kathereros Anti-Powders. Cleansing, soothing, healing in plain box with directions, postpaid. Kathereros Co., 500 E. 86th St., New York.

## Stammering

**ST-STU-T-T-T-ERING** And Stammer Cured At Home. Instructive booklet. Victor Melchers, 80 Potomac Bank Bldg., Washington, D. C.

## Shorthand

**SHORTHAND**—Best practical system in 5 hours; speed with easy progress lessons. brochure free. Kim Stuffs, EB-26, Station F, New York.

## Miscellaneous

**HAVE YOU TOURED FLORIDA?** thousand original photographs, covering all Florida. Select your town or county. Have 50 photographic sets for cents; double cards three for fifty. Add postage and will mail, without cost to your friends. Send us your stamp cents per roll; print five cents each; enlargement of your best negative free every dollar order; expert service—prompt replies. Have colored views. Low price upon request. Florida curios. A make big money. Write us. Photo 87 Box A1913, Jacksonville, Fla.

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements



**FREE**  
**For 10 Days Wear**

## Compare with a DIAMOND

Yes, free—not a penny to send. Just take your choice of these exquisite Tifnite gems and we will send it on our liberal 10 days' free trial offer. When you receive the ring, examine it closely. Note its dazzling brilliancy. Compare it with the finest diamonds. If you can tell the difference, send it back.

## SOLID GOLD MOUNTINGS

It takes an expert to distinguish between a Tifnite and a genuine diamond. Tifnites stand every diamond test—fire, acid and diamond file. All set in latest solid gold mountings.

**No. 1. Solid gold mounting, 8-claw design. Wide flat band. Almost a carat in size, guaranteed genuine Tifnite Gem. Price, \$12.50; only \$3.50 on arrival. Balance \$9 per month.**

**No. 2. Latest solid gold mounting. Guaranteed genuine Tifnite Gem. Almost a carat in size. Price, \$12.50; only \$3.50 on arrival. Balance \$9 per month.**

**No. 3. Solid gold, six prong, both Bachelor mounting. Guaranteed genuine Tifnite Gem. Almost a carat in size. Price, \$12.50; only \$3.50 on arrival. Balance, \$9 per month.**

**Order Now—Quick!** Tifnite Gem prices reduced—name now as before war. Easiest terms. Send strip of paper fitting exactly around second joint of finger for size and mention style wanted. Pay only \$3.50 on arrival. No obligation—wear it 10 days. If you keep it, pay balance at \$9 per month until special price of \$12.50 is paid. If not satisfied, return it and get money back. Don't wait. Send today.

THE TIFNITE COMPANY 511 S. Plymouth St. Dept. 1573 Chicago, Ill.



## What Do You Owe Your Wife?

Do you remember the promises you made when you wooed the girl who is now your wife? Have you forgotten the scenes your fancy painted—that home of your own—a real yard for the kids—a maid to lighten the household burdens—a tidy sun in the bank—a wonderful trip every summer? She has not forgotten. She still hopes that you will make true these dreams. She still has faith in you.

You don't want to disappoint your wife and make her life a burden, do you? You want to put the light of happiness in her eyes. You have in you the power, the ability and surely the desire to make good your promises, and you can do it easily. If you could only realize how quickly success came to thousands of other husbands, how splendidly they made true the dreams of courtship days, then nothing in the world could stop you from your success and happiness. After all is said and done, it is money and its right use that promotes contentment. Lack of money makes the cold realities of present day life a bitter trial and constant worry. It makes young wives old before their time—it brings bitterness in to homes where happiness should rule.

A BIG RAISE IN YOUR SALARY is possible for you. Go after it. You can easily double and treble your pay by our plan. It is nothing new and untied. Our plan has helped thousands of men and women for the last quarter of a century. Mark the coupon for the job in which you are interested and we will send you our free book and copies of voluntary letters from some of our students who made good in the line in which you want to succeed. Send us coupon today. You owe it to your wife.

## AMERICAN SCHOOL

Dept. GC4 Drexel Ave. and 58th St., Chicago, Ill.

## AMERICAN SCHOOL

Dept. GC4 Drexel Ave. and 58th St., Chicago, Ill.


Explain how I can qualify for position checked:

- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| .....Architect               | .....Lawyer                |
| .....Building Contractor     | .....Mechanical Engineer   |
| .....Automobile Engineer     | .....Shop Superintendent   |
| .....Automobile Repairman    | .....Employment Manager    |
| .....Civil Engineer          | .....Steam Engineer        |
| .....Structural Engineer     | .....Foreman's Course      |
| .....Business Manager        | .....Sanitary Engineer     |
| .....Cert. Public Accountant | .....Telephone Engineer    |
| .....Accountant and Auditor  | .....Telegraph Engineer    |
| .....Draftsman and Designer  | .....High School Graduate  |
| .....Electrical Engineer     | .....Fire Insurance Expert |
| .....General Education       |                            |

Name.....

Address.....

## "DON'T SHOUT"



"I can hear you with the MORLEY PHONE." It is invisible, weightless, comfortable, inexpensive. No metal, wires nor rubber. Can be used by anyone, young or old. The Morley Phone for the DEAF

is to the ears what glasses are to the eyes. Write for Free Booklet containing testimonials of users all over the country. It describes causes of deafness; tells how and why the MORLEY PHONE affords relief. Over one hundred thousand sold.

THE MORLEY CO., Dept. 758, 26 S. 15 St., Phila.

## Stop Using a Truss



Wardens Fac-Simile Gold Medal.



Grand Prix.

StUART'S PLAPAO-PADS are different from the truss, being medicine applicators made of self-adhesive material, possibly to hold the distended muscles securely in place. No straps, buckles and covers attached—cannot slip, so cannot chafe or press against the public bone. Thousands have successfully treated themselves at home without hindrance from work—most obstinate cases cured.

Soft as velvet—easy to apply—inexpensive. Awarded Gold Medal and Grand Prix. Process of recovery is natural, so afterwards no further use for trusses. We prove it by sending Trial of Plapao absolutely FREE.

Write name on Coupon and send TODAY. FREE Plapao Co. 633 Stuart Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

Name.....

Address.....

Return mail will bring Free Trial Plapao.....

# ASPIRIN

Name "Bayer" on Genuine



Take Aspirin only as told in each package of genuine Bayer Tablets of Aspirin. Then you will be following the directions and dosage worked out by physicians during 21 years, and proved safe by millions. Take no chances with substitutes. If you see the Bayer Cross on tablets, you can take them without fear for Colds, Headache, Neuralgia, Rheumatism, Earache, Toothache, Lumbago and for Pain. Handy tin boxes of twelve tablets cost few cents. Druggists also sell larger packages. Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monoaceticacidester of Salicylicacid.

## Banish YOUR Ailments



Get rid of your ailments and physical defects. Banish the weaknesses that make your life a wretched failure. What good is life anyway, when one day of misery just follows another with no relief in sight, and big bills to pay for dope and drugs that can never help you and may seriously injure you.

No matter what your condition is or what caused it you can aid Nature in overcoming your nagging complaints and fit yourself for the joys of life with **STRONGFORTISM**, the Modern Science of Health Promotion.

A lifetime's experience and research is contained in my free book, "Promotion and Conservation of Health, Strength and Mental Energy." It will tell you the truth about your physical condition and show you how you can make yourself over into a vigorous specimen of vital magnetic manhood. Mention the subjects on which you want special information and send to me with a 10c. piece (one dime) to help pay postage, etc. Send for my FREE book **Right Now—TODAY.**

**LIONEL STRONGFORT**  
Physical and Health Specialist  
Dept. 404, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

## BE A JAZZ MUSIC MASTER PLAY BY EAR



Play popular song hits perfectly by ear. Hear the tune, play it **BY EAR**. No tedious ding-dong daily practice—just 20 brief, entertaining lessons which you can master in no time. Send for the **FREE BOOK**. It tells how to start if you want musical ability at which friends will marvel.

**NIAGARA SCHOOL OF MUSIC,**  
Dept. 384 Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Send for this Free Book

## Free Book

Containing complete story of the origin and history of that wonderful instrument—the

## SAXOPHONE

This book tells you when to use Saxophone—singly, in quartettes, in sextettes, or in regular band; how to transpose solo parts in orchestra and many other things you would like to know.

You can learn to play the scale in one hour's practice, and soon be playing popular airs. You can double your income, your pleasure, and your popularity. **Easy to play by our easy payment plan.**

## MAKES AN IDEAL PRESENT

Send for free Saxophone book and estimate of everything in Free-Time band and orchestra instruments.

**BUESCHER BAND INSTRUMENT CO.**  
Buescher Block, Elkhart, Ind.

Easy to Play  
Easy to Pay

## FREE BOOK



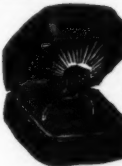
## LEARN PIANO!

This Interesting Free Book shows how you can become a skilled player of piano or organ in your own home. It cost-quarter usual cost. Dr. Quinn's famous Written Method is endorsed by leading musicians and heads of State Conservatories. Successful 25 years. Play chords at once and complete piece in every key, within 4 lessons. Scientific and easy to understand. Fully illustrated. For beginners or teachers, old or young. **Muscle free. Diploma granted.** Write today in 64-page free book, "How to Learn Piano," M. L. Quinn Conservatory, Studio AF28, 598 Columbia Rd., Boston, 25, Mass.

## MAKE MONEY AT HOME

YOU can earn from \$1 to \$2 an hour in your spare time writing show cards. Quickly and easily learned by our new simple method. No canvassing or soliciting, we teach you how, sell your work and pay you cash each week. Full particulars and booklet free.

**AMERICAN SHOW CARD SCHOOL**  
240 Ryrie Building, Yonge & Shuter Streets  
**TORONTO CANADA**



## FREE DIAMOND RING OFFER

Just to advertise our famous Hawaiian 14k diamonds—the greatest discovery the world has ever known. We will send absolutely free this 14k gold ring, set with a 1-1/2 Hawaiian 14k diamond—in beautiful ring box postage paid. Pay postmaster \$14. C. O. D. charges to cover postage, boxing, advertising, handling, etc. If you can tell if from a real diamond return and money refunded. Only 10,000 given away. Send no money. Answer quick. Send size of finger.

**KRAUTH & REED, Dept. 412**  
MASONIC TEMPLE CHICAGO



## Skin Troubles

— Soothed —

## With Cuticura

Soap, Ointment, Talcum, etc. everywhere. Samples free of Cuticura Laboratories, Dept. D, Malden, Mass.

## Play the Hawaiian Guitar Just Like the Hawaiians!

Our method of teaching is so simple, plain and easy that you begin on a piece with your first lesson. In half an hour you can play it! The necessary motions you learn to only four—and you acquire these in a few minutes. Then it is only a matter of practice to acquire the weird, fascinating tremolos, staccatos, shurs, and other effects that make this instrument so delightful. The Hawaiian Guitar plays any kind of music, both the melody and the accompaniment. Your tuition fee includes a beautiful Hawaiian Guitar, all the necessary picks and steel bar and 52 complete lessons and pieces of music.

Special arrangements for lessons if you have your own guitar.



Send Coupon NOW  
Get Full Particulars FREE

First Hawaiian Conservatory of Music, Inc.  
233 Broadway NEW YORK

I am interested in the HAWAIIAN GUITAR. Please send complete information, special price offer, etc., etc.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

TOWN .....

STATE ..... S. & S.

Write Name and Address Clearly



**FREE**  
**Brushes, Colors, Supplies**  
**Earn \$15. to \$25. Daily**

Big money made at show card and sign writing. Easy, interesting profession. Learn it in a few hours! Spare time. We furnish colors and artists' materials free. Earn money while you learn. Become independent. Go into business for yourself.

Big Demand for Show Card Writers

Show cards and posters are needed by National and local advertisers and every live dealer and merchant in your town. High prices paid. You can make this money. We show you how.

Send for FREE Literature

Contains complete information how you can obtain brushes, colors, supplies, free and become show card writer. No obligation. Send name and address today.

ALPHA SHOW CARD SCHOOL, 1123CB Broadway, N.Y. City

## Free to Writers!



A WONDERFUL BOOK—read about it! Tells how early Stories and Plays are conceived, written, perfected, sold. How many who don't DREAM they can write, suddenly find it out. How the Scenario Kings and the Story Queens live and work. How bright men and women, without any special experience, learn to their own amazement that their simplest ideas may furnish brilliant plots for Plays and Stories. How the writer's own imagination may provide an endless gold-mine of ideas that bring Happy Success and Handsome Cash Royalties. How new writers get their names into print. How to tell if you ARE a writer. How to develop your "story fancy," weave clever word-pictures and unique, thrilling, realistic plots. How your friends may be your worst judges. How to avoid discouragement and the pitfalls of Failure. How to win! This surprising book is absolutely free. No charge. No obligation. Your copy is waiting for you. Write for it now. Just address

AUTHORS' PRESS, Dept. 153, AUBURN, NEW YORK



## High School Course in Two Years!

### You Want to Earn Big Money!

And you will not be satisfied unless you earn steady promotion. But are you prepared for the job ahead of you? Do you measure up to the standard that insures success? For a more responsible position a fairly good education is necessary. To write a sensible business letter, to prepare estimates, to figure cost and to compute interest, you must have a certain amount of preparation. All this you must be able to do before you will earn promotion. Many business houses hire no men whose general knowledge is not equal to a high school course. Why? Because big business refuses to burden itself with men who are barred from promotion by the lack of elementary education.

### Can You Qualify for a Better Position

We have a plan whereby you can. We can give you a complete but simplified high school course in two years, giving you all the essentials that form the foundation of practical business. It will prepare you to hold your own where competition is keen and exacting. Do not doubt your ability, but make up your mind to it and you will soon have the requirements that will bring you success and big money. YOU CAN DO IT.

Let us show you how to get on the road to success. It will not cost you a single working hour. We are so sure of being able to help you that we will cheerfully return to you, at the end of ten lessons, every cent you sent us if you are not absolutely satisfied. What fairer offer can we make you? Write today. It costs you nothing but a stamp.

AMERICAN SCHOOL  
Dept. HC4, Drexel Ave. and 58th St., Chicago

## AMERICAN SCHOOL

AMERICAN SCHOOL  
Dept. HC4, Drexel Ave. and 58th St., Chicago

Explain how I can qualify for position checked:

...Architect	\$5,000 to \$15,000	...Lawyer	\$5,000 to \$15,000
...Building Contractor	\$5,000 to \$10,000	...Mechanical Engineer	\$4,000 to \$10,000
...Automobile Engineer	\$4,000 to \$10,000	...Shop Superintendent	\$3,000 to \$7,000
...Automobile Repairman	\$2,500 to \$4,000	...Employment Manager	\$4,000 to \$10,000
...Civil Engineer	\$5,000 to \$15,000	...Steam Engineer	\$3,000 to \$4,000
...Structural Engineer	\$4,000 to \$10,000	...Foreman's Course	\$2,000 to \$4,000
...Business Manager	\$5,000 to \$15,000	...Sanitary Engineer	\$2,000 to \$5,000
...Certified Public Accountant	\$7,000 to \$15,000	...Telephone Engineer	\$2,500 to \$5,000
...Accountant and Auditor	\$2,500 to \$7,000	...Telegraph Engineer	\$2,500 to \$5,000
...Draftsman and Designer	\$2,500 to \$4,000	...High School Graduate	\$2,500 to \$5,000
...Electrical Engineer	\$4,000 to \$10,000	...Fire Insurance Expert	\$2,000 to \$10,000
...General Education in one year			

Name ..... Address .....

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements





*This is an actual photograph  
of Raymond Hitchcock's hand  
holding an OMAR.*

© 1931, A. T. Co.

# In Raymond Hitchcock's hand **OMAR** is entirely at home

Omar Omar spells **Aroma**  
Omar Omar *is* **Aroma**  
**Aroma** makes a cigarette;  
They've told you that for years  
Smoke Omar for **Aroma**.

Thirteen kinds of choice Turkish and  
six kinds of selected Domestic tobaccos  
are blended to give Omar its delicate  
and distinctive **Aroma**.

*They always go together—*

Ham and Eggs  
Jack and Jill  
Peaches and Cream

*and*

**OMAR and AROMA.**



Manufactured by  
*The American Tobacco Co.*

—which means that if you don't like  
**OMAR CIGARETTES** you can  
get your money back from the dealer



# SMITH'S MAGAZINE

Volume 33

AUGUST, 1921

Number 4

## Unexplained

By Frances E. Gale

Author of "Pemberton's Decision," "Across the Sea," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. J. DINSMORE

**It was indeed a crisis in the life of Bishop Stanley when he had to conceal a criminal or outrage all his own natural feelings. A deeply interesting story of a human being.**

FROM the deck of any Great Lakes steamer, if it reaches a certain stage of its voyage on a clear night, it looks to an imaginative eye as if a hand had torn from the crowded sky a myriad stars and thickly strewn them along far-divided, opposing shores. Upon one side the glittering stream keeps pace for miles with the dark water which reflects its starry edge. Upon the other the lights soon break into clusters, then into groups, a little farther into single stars which closer view would often prove to be the window illumination of some cottage, a rural rendezvous for pleasure-seeking motorists, and the stage for many a convivial scene not strictly rural in its nature. In some cases an unchecked growth backs or partly surrounds these cottages, and the lights peep out through trees and underbrush with an effect of mysterious beckoning.

On a starlit but moonless night a man stood by the open window in a room which, occupying half the space of one of these road houses, was devoted to food and dancing. A phonograph jazzed so-called music for the uncertain feet of dancers among the now

almost deserted tables. It was well past midnight, and the less adventurous guests had noisily taken the homeward road. The women who remained, despite rouge-lit cheeks and pencil-shadowed eyes, betrayed weariness except where their gayety plainly sprang from the same source as that of their male companions.

The man at the window was of middle height and slight build. His hat, pushed far back upon his head, showed his hair to be a little gray. The features had a delicacy usually indicating breeding, but the eyes, hard and blood-shot, more than hinted at dissipation, and the mouth had an ugly, cynical twist which, nevertheless, melted at times into a melancholy which spoke of self-contemptuous discontent. Through the discordant grind of the needle on the worn record there came to his ear a low whistle from outside. He carelessly seated himself on the sill and with his back against the side casing threw his foot upon a chair, thus, apparently by accident, barring the near approach of any of the dancers to the outside view. From his place he could see in the bushes a small light flash out and

disappear, then another, and presently a whisper came from just behind his shoulder:

"How much?"

The man in the window did not turn his head. His jaws stretched in a yawn, and he put up his hand as though to conceal a second. Behind it he said:

"Nothing, you fool. Don't you know I've got a big job on to-night? Tell those fellows to clear out with their lights or they'll queer the game. The boat ought to be out there now."

The swart-skinned proprietor, half French, half Indian, lounged toward the window and leaned against the wall, his mouth a foot from his patron's head.

"Time to close up?"

"Yes, and quick about it. The truck will be here in five minutes."

The proprietor strolled to the center of the room and, grinning, but with authority, tapped a dancer upon the shoulder and showed him his open watch. With jocularly profane protests, but no serious rebellion, two waiting automobiles were filled, the occupants too muddled from the nature of the evening's refreshments to notice that one guest still remained.

In five minutes the house was dark. Then from a front window there reached out a thin wand of light. Like an investigating finger it touched the dark water near the shore, then wavered its way farther out and for a second rested upon a motor boat rocking idly in the river. As it vanished the boat steadied, turned, and shot in to the shore. At the same time a motor truck came rapidly along the shore road, swung into a rough lane, and drew up behind the cottage. It was met by the man who outstayed the dancers. In low tones he gave quick instructions, and then preceded three men carrying a heavy box down to the rude landing to which the little launch was now made fast. There he took his place in the boat, ousting its former occupant, who

assisted the other men in carrying down another and yet another wooden case, the contents of which to judge from their care in handling were of no small value. Then the men remaining upon shore released the boat from its moorings, the solitary boatman started his engine, and the little vessel with her cargo soon became a mere shadow on the fitfully gleaming breast of the starlit river.

"Extra! All about the murder! Revenue officer shot by rum runner. Paper!"

Big and hoarse-voiced the boy elbowed roughly among the people thronging the sidewalk in front of St. Stephen's, but when he attempted to push his wares upon those ascending the church steps, a policeman by voice and hand curbed his fervor of salesmanship.

"Here, you! Quit that hollerin' here. Get over across the street."

The boy, growling in his throat, shook the compelling grip from his shoulder and bounded to the edge of the walk just in time to bump against a man who, with the difficulty of lameness, was alighting from a taxi.

"Paper!" he yelled in the man's ear, thrusting the flaring headlines before the face of the possible buyer. "Of'cer shot by rum runner!"

The man staggered from the contact, his balance almost lost and his face twisting with pain as the crippled limb failed to meet the sudden demand upon it.

"Get out!" he exclaimed savagely and, without asking the amount of the fare, thrust a bill into the hand of the driver; then, awkwardly aiding himself with a stick, limped to the center of the walk. Turning, he took a few steps south and paused in front of a weather-stained, ivy-grown, many-gabled house, nestled almost against the old gray church, as though the past home life

of the city had made its last stand there against the mad onrush of business roaring and tearing at its skirts.

The man took hold of the six-foot iron fence and peered through the bars. There was no sign of life at the front of the house, but from a side door he saw a woman in the dress of a nurse come out and walk down the narrow slip of pavement between the church and the house to a small gate near which he stood. She looked up at him as she opened it and came out, and, as with a sudden change of purpose, he turned and followed her.

A thickening stream of people converging from both north and south of the avenue were now ascending the church steps, while automobiles parked around the corner of the intersecting street sent their loads to increase the throng. As the man painfully mounted in the wake of the crisply blue dress, they were surrounded by the crowd which, tossing greetings back and forth, exhaled an effect of cheery affluence contrasting sharply with the halting figure. As he made an at first ineffectual effort to gain the topmost step, the nurse turned and, seeing his difficulty, put a helpful hand under his elbow, then passed on through the great gothic doors. The



"Paper!" he yelled in the man's ear, thrusting the flaring headlines before the face of the possible buyer. "Ofcer shot by rum runner!"

man followed, entering a vestibule some twenty feet broad and running across the entire front of the church. From it three wide doorways led to the center and side aisles. The vestibule was filled, but through the shifting, talkative, waiting groups, there was a steady inpouring of those who sought seats at once. The man, joining those approaching the center aisle, did not notice that all held tickets in their hands until he was halted by an usher.

"Your ticket, please."

He put his hand in his pocket, and withdrew it with a simulation of surprise at the ticket's absence.

"Sorry." The usher's urbanity thinly concealed suspicion. "Only ticket holders are admitted up to ten-thirty. After that, if there's room—but perhaps you'll find a seat in the gallery now."

The man turned back and from the floor looked up at crowding people ascending a winding staircase, a task impossible for him. Along the wall of the vestibule, between the center and side-aisle entrances, a long seat was filled with waiting ladies. As he stood easing his weight by leaning against a slender pillar, a girl rose from the end of the bench and, with a compassionate smile, motioned him to take her place. He did so, dropping into the seat without expression of thanks, and winning a look of displeasure from the lady next him, deepening as she noticed his hat which he had failed to remove and now pulled forward shadowing his eyes. She pressed closer to the lady upon her other side and continued their conversation:

"I don't believe I'll ever be able to say 'Bishop' Stanley. It doesn't seem so very long since I used to call him Carter. You know we came from the same town. It's really too young to consecrate. Not forty yet. But he's an unusual man, and he has a wonderful career before him." She dropped her voice, but her words were still audible: "Do you think Gertrude Forsythe will be a help or a hindrance to him?"

"Oh, a help." The answer was emphatic. "Her family has all kinds of influence in the East. There isn't a wire they couldn't pull if wires were needed. And look at her social prestige. And her appearance. She'll carry everything before her."

"Socially, yes. But is she deep enough for him, spiritually?"

"My dear, success for a bishop has in it a lot of ingredients besides spirituality. And if he can't furnish them himself, he's wise to acquire a wife who can. I'm not saying that Carter Stanley is a 'child of this world.' He's not. But Gertrude is, and she'll bring to the union some of the wisdom so useful in 'this generation.' I heard that he wanted to be married very quietly last spring, but she wouldn't have it until after he was consecrated. The wedding will be a gorgeous affair, I suppose, when it comes off. They say Gertrude turned down a baronet when she was abroad. She says baronets are more plentiful matrimonially than bishops. If my sister's party doesn't come soon, there'll not be a seat left. Ah, there they are!"

She stood up, beckoning, and presently disappeared with other ticket-favored arrivals.

In the wing adjoining the farther end of the building, under the bustling direction of the cleric officiating as master of ceremonies, an imposing procession was forming, and the preluding notes of the organ rolled over the heads of the waiting congregation hushing its murmur into silence. Ticket holders were accommodated with seats in the body of the church, but late comers crowded the galleries or pressed about the wide-open doors below. The music swept out, wave upon wave, to the ears of those in the vestibule. Presently there was a whisper of "Here they come," and those near the entrances stood on tiptoe and craned their necks to see the distant door at the left of the chancel open and the first marching figure emerge. It was the crucifer, a tall youth in white surplice, with face upturned to the gleaming cross he bore aloft before him. Following him the choir, a slow, white river, streaming under the low, massive arch and down the aisle. Behind it black-coated vestrymen of this and sister churches,

affluent respectability personified, fifty or more strong. Surplices again, two and two, visiting clergy from many parishes, clerical members of special councils and committees, the whiteness of their robes vividly splashed with crimson, purple, gold, or silken black. Then bishops, come to honor the man about to join their ranks, the swelling sleeves, the cross upon the ample breast, the episcopal ring upon the plump hand, emphasizing, in some cases, that ease had come with years and distinction, although in others the marks of added burdens could as plainly be seen. Then a group of presbyters, and behind them a tall figure walking alone.

The eyes of the young bishop-elect looked over the many heads before him—none rose quite so high as his own—to where the sunlight pierced each side window and kissed the shining metal of the passing crucifix into a triumphant glow. The set lines of his face indicated repressed emotion. There were heavy shadows under the fine eyes. The plain, priestly robe fell from his spare, athletic shoulders in long, straight folds which could not quite conceal the difficult curbing of his stride to the music's stately march. He looked neither to right nor left, not even upon passing the pew where, with her father and other friends, Gertrude Forsythe stood, her beautiful face, under its plume-encircled hat, flushed, and her eyes alight with conscious pride. Behind him the two presenting bishops, personal friends of his own, smiled as they lustily joined in the singing, the long train ending with the stately figure of the presiding bishop of the church.

The path of the procession lay down the left aisle, along the vestibule, and up the center aisle to the chancel. As the first marcher appeared at the vestibule door the onlookers there fell back to the farther end or crowded the staircase. The usher at the center door intimated to those nearest that there was

room within for a few more, and, with others, the lame man slipped in. At sight of his evident suffering a man arose and resigned to him a place at the end of the third pew. His hat was off now, and his thick, dark hair, partially gray, clung to his wet forehead. He stood as others did while the procession passed up the aisle, but grasped for support the pew back before him, licking his feverish lips and watching with burning eyes the marchers whose vestments brushed his sleeve.

As the group of presbyters passed he turned his head, but the eyes of the bishop-elect did not meet his. They were fixed upon the altar far in advance toward which the crucifer was already beginning to mount the chancel steps. The man's face twitched and his hands gripped hard the wood before him; then as the last marcher filed past he dropped into his seat and so remained regardless of the changing attitudes of those about him.

The music waxed and waned as the long ceremonial progressed, the silver sopranos of the boys awaking in the roof's shadowy arch echoes which might have been the answering call of distant angels. A bishop entered the pulpit, and the candidate, rising from his place, stood while the address was delivered.

The speaker was an old man, and his face was alight with the earnestness which burned through its transparent delicacy. He seemed to forget the listening throng and to speak directly to the younger man. He who dares enter the van of the church's army must be prepared, even when all seems easy, for an extreme test of his fitness for leadership. Publicly and privately the tests will come. Fires will be lit along his path and he must be ready to cast into them all petty ambitions, all physical indulgence, if need be, all human affections. They must be no empty vows which he takes, for he cannot tell how



Carter Stanley, now robed  
walked with head bent and  
less prayer in his heart was  
scarcely conscious of his  
and looked straight into a  
pew near

soon the day may come when he will be called to fulfill them to the letter.

As the speaker proceeded, the eyes of the pain-racked man far down the church partly closed and his head drooped, but his attention again became fixed as, at the close of the exhortation, questions were put by the presiding bishop and answered by the candidate. As the last solemn query was uttered: "Will you show yourself gentle and merciful to poor and needy people, and to strangers destitute of help?" and the answer came: "I will so show myself," the muscles of the lame man's face

twitched convulsively, and for a moment he covered its betrayal of weakness with his hand.



in the vestments of his new office, hands clasped before him. The word for strength, for understanding. He surrounded as he lifted his eyes face thrust out toward his from a the door.



When, at the conclusion of the long ceremony, the procession formed once more, Carter Stanley, now robed in the

vestments of his new office, walked with head bent and hands clasped before him. In this moment of attainment the lift of soul far exceeded the joy of accomplished ambition, and of that lift was born a humility which trembled before the burdens he had assumed. The wordless prayer in his heart was for strength, for understanding. He was scarcely conscious of his surroundings as he lifted his eyes and looked straight into a face thrust out toward his from a pew near the door.

The procession of which, in its turnings, a forward section had become

confused, came to a momentary halt. The new bishop's sudden backward step appeared the natural result of the action of those preceding him. As he stood staring into the eyes before his, close onlookers saw his sudden pallor and whispered to each other that he was worn out, that the strain of preparation for this day, added to his normally heavy duties, had been too much even for his well-known endurance. His clasped hands parted, his lips opened, then recollecting the scene in which he was the principal figure, his head went up, the procession moved on, and presently he was walking through the vestibule and up the left aisle sharply conscious for the first time that day of being the cynosure for thousands of critical, if friendly, eyes. "Tests will come. Fires will be lit along the path." The words echoed in his ears. To himself Carter Stanley said but one word: "Steady!"

As the groupings of the procession dispersed in the adjoining school auditorium, his brothers of the cloth and of the episcopate crowded about, shaking his hand, congratulating, welcoming.

"Glad you're going to have a month's rest before you tackle your new work," his old friend, the preacher of the day, said. "You're a bit tired, my boy. Confess it, and relax."

"Better not relax until I'm out of these sleeves. I'm afraid I'll always get tangled up in them."

He forced a smile as he disengaged himself from his new robes and resigned them to the curate who was assisting him. He was feverishly anxious to absent himself temporarily from the throng of his friends.

"Now, if you fellows"—he smiled affectionately upon those closest—"will make yourself at home in the church, I'll join you shortly. Lunch will be served there at two-thirty. I have to run over to my house for a few

minutes, but I'll not keep you waiting."

"Don't," a portly dignitary admonished him, "unless you want to be eaten as a first course when you return. My appetite is sharp enough for any sort of hors d'œuvre."

He was thankful that the presiding bishop had declined to be his guest, preferring to accept the hospitality of a relative in the city. It left him free of strangers in his home until the formal dinner which was to take place there in the evening. He hurried through the church and across the intervening space to his house. Inside the front door his housekeeper met him. Her dignified black silk and fine lace signified her respect for the occasion.

"Accept my congratulations, Bishop Stanley," she said stiffly, but with shining eyes.

"Thank you, Mrs. Leonard." He held out his hand and clasped hers warmly. "I wanted you to know there'll be one place less at dinner. Mr. Farnsworth could not come. And has any one been here this morning?"

"Not in the morning, sir. But a few minutes ago a man came to the side door and asked for you. Miss Marsh let him in. I was sorry she did it, but he told her he had an appointment with you, and would wait. I didn't quite believe it, but she said he was lame and looked sick, and I thought you mightn't like him to be turned away. I haven't seen him. He's in your study now. Shall I tell him to go? I didn't just know what I ought to do."

"You did quite right. I'll see him. But tell any one else who comes that I'll be engaged for the rest of the day."

He strode down the long hall. The door of his study was opposite the side door generally used by those seeking interviews with the rector. With his hand upon the knob he hesitated an instant, then entered. The room was shabby, comfortable, book-dominated,

the well-used workroom of a student. A great old-fashioned fireplace, screened now, suggested the companionship of leaping flames in chilly weather. Through the tall, narrow window at the farther side, partly shaded by ivy, the light fell across a great writing table in the middle of the room. In the leather chair before it a man sat. His head, which had been sunk upon his breast, went up, and he gripped the chair arms with either hand, but he did not attempt to rise. His eyes, large and dark, flamed feverishly, and his features, weather-browned but regular, twitched as he attempted words; then, forsaking the effort, he waited for the other to speak.

Stanley closed the door and for a moment stood with his back against it, gazing as if to assure himself against mistake. Then he advanced, holding out his hand.

"Lawrence! I was not sure that my eyes told the truth when I saw you in the church. I had thought you were dead."

The damp fingers of the visitor clung as the bishop's firm grasp was withdrawn, but his answer rasped bitterly:

"And hoped it."

"No." Stanley's face was stern as he stepped backward until his shoulders came against the high mantel shelf. "There were some hopes I did have for you, but not that."

"Well, your hopes, whatever they were, are over now."

"You are in trouble?"

The man groaned.

"Yes. I'm in trouble."

"You want me to help you?"

"If you don't help me, no one can. And it's got to be done quick. I'm in the worst trouble a man can be in."

"What do you mean?"

The man shoved his hand in an inner pocket and drew out a fragment of newspaper. It was torn from the front page of an earlier issue than that the

newsboys had shouted some hours before, but it carried the same shrieking headline. He thrust it toward Stanley, who, failing to take it, let it fall upon the floor.

"That's the trouble I'm in," he said hoarsely; then put his arm upon the table beside him, leaned his forehead upon it, and broke into stifled, horrible sobs.

The new bishop, his face deadly white, stooped and picked up the piece of paper. He read the headline, once, twice, then what remained of the smaller type beneath.

"You mean——"

His voice did not shake, but it was very low, and the two words were formed with difficulty.

"I mean," the man lifted his head and fell back in the chair, his hands again gripping its arms, "that the police are searching the city for me now, and I couldn't go a step farther if I was to be hanged the next minute."

"You are ill?"

"Ill!" He leaned forward, both hands clasping his leg below the knee. "Man, I'm in the torture of the damned. My leg is shot to pieces. I've dragged myself here because it would be the last place they'd think to look for me. But there's no telling who was watching when I got out of the taxi. When I saw the crowd going into the church, I went in with them because I thought it would put those dogs off the scent, and then I found out what the fuss was about, and stayed until I could make you see me." He paused, his eyes searching with crafty desperation the other's face. "I knew you'd come over and help me."

There was silence during which the ivy could be heard tapping lazily against the glass. Then the bishop spoke deliberately:

"How did you know I would help you?"

The man made a passionate gesture



The new bishop, his face deadly white, stooped and picked up the piece of paper. He read the headlines once, twice, then what remained of the smaller type beneath.

and an effort to rise from which he sank back, moaning.

"Oh, very well, then." His ragged articulation had the effect of a despair-

ing scream, although it was forced to a low tone. "Throw me in the street, and in half an hour I'll be in the hands of the police. They're so gentle, those

fellows, when one of their own bunch has got what's coming to him. And by night there'll be the prettiest scandal this town ever licked its chops over. Isn't there a bed in your house you could put me in, a room you can lock and leave me in, until this hullabaloo at the church is over and we can think straight? *Some one's* got to use his brains for me. I'm crazy with pain."

There was a knock at the door. Stanley went to it, opening it a few inches only. The other man huddled down in the great chair, shading his face with his hand. A choir boy stood outside.

"Mr. Heatherly sent me to ask if you would be detained much longer, sir. He would like to know if he is to tell the caterer to serve the luncheon."

"Tell him I will be there in fifteen minutes."

Stanley closed the door and turned back to his visitor.

"Can you walk?" he asked.

"I must," the man groaned. "It's getting worse all the time."

"Put your arm over my shoulder and I'll help you up the stairs. There's a room there you must stay in until late to-night. There'll be a dinner here, and I cannot leave my guests again to-day."

"Will any one see us?"

"I'll see that they don't."

He left the room for a few moments and, returning, held out his arm.

"Come. Put your weight on me."

The two men made their way along the hall and up the stairs, thence to a room at the back of the second floor. As Stanley unlocked the door a weak, childish voice called from the floor above:

"Is that you, Miss Marsh?"

"No," Stanley called back, affected cheerfulness in his tone. "She's downstairs, Margot. Don't get out of bed."

The room was evidently unused, but there was a bed in it partially made up, and other furniture. The man sank upon the mattress in moaning abandon-

ment to long-fought exhaustion. The bishop hurriedly left the room, returning with a sleeping garment of his own which he hung upon the footboard.

"Do you need food?" he asked.

"No. You'd better go. They'll be wondering what you are doing. Leave me the key."

"It's in the door. Take it out when you lock it. There's one like it in the door of the next room. I'll let myself in after they're all gone to-night."

He stood a moment looking down at the prostrate figure, then quietly left the room and, descending to his study, rang the bell.

"Mrs. Leonard," he said when the housekeeper appeared, "I know the man you let in this morning. He's sick, and I'm going to keep him here over-night. I've put him in the room next mine. Don't disturb him. He needs nothing except rest."

The housekeeper gasped. With a hundred luncheon guests at the church to-day, and a dinner party in his own house to-night, the rector—she still thought of him as the rector—was at his old tricks, succoring the needy, sheltering the homeless. But she knew him too well to protest.

"Very well, Mr. Stanley," she said, forgetting the title it had been her pride to call him before.

When at the close of the gustatory part of the great luncheon the guests turned toward the standing figure of the new bishop and settled into attitudes of expectancy, they were surprised by the shortness and dryness of his address. As a pulpit orator his reputation was considerable, and it was an occasion upon which depth of feeling would be natural, and wit not wholly out of place. The audience was disappointed to find so little opportunity either for sympathy or smiles. Beyond a short, throbbing reference to the tremendous obligations suggested by the

recent address in the church, his effort did not overtop the rhetorical level of the least gifted of his hearers. His words were without spontaneity, his face without radiance. The speakers who followed were at a loss for "leads," and the gathering was only saved from dullness by a few whose speeches, prepared in advance, were independent of any collateral prop. When the assemblage began to disperse, the old Eastern bishop took the younger man aside.

"Carter," he said, "I've known you since your college days and I know when you're 'all in.' It's five o'clock now. Go to your house and take an hour's rest, just plain physical relaxation. Murdoch and I will go for a stroll in this fine city of yours and get back about seven. Dinner is at eight, isn't it?"

"I believe you're right, Bishop Lyle. Not that I'm 'all in' by any means, but the last week has been a pretty heavy one, and I ought to run through my mail before dinner. I've not had a chance to look at it to-day. If you'll make my excuses to any one I've overlooked speaking to, I'll slip away, and when you and the dean come in you can go to your rooms and rest a bit before dinner. Mrs. Leonard will take care of you." He gripped the old man's hand and, descending the stairs to a side door, crossed to his own house.

The silence of his study welcomed him like a friend, but when he sank down in his customary chair by the table he quickly rose again and, with a shudder, pushed it aside, taking another, less restful seat. A heap of letters confronted him. He fingered them mechanically; then, leaning back, thrust his hands deep in his pockets in frowning concentrative effort. He must drag out from the mental recess into which he had forced it the thing that had crashed into his life that morning. Now that he was alone he must look at it, face its hideousness, decide how

to grapple with it. As yet he had no impulse to turn to that Higher Power to whom for years he had taken all perplexities. He felt as if shut in a dark and doorless room from which the very air was slowly being sucked off. Swift decision, action, were imperative, yet decision seemed to present only the alternative of one or another moral abyss.

He rose and walked up and down the room; then, answering a tap at the door, received from the hand of a maid his newspaper. He took it to the window and stood scanning its front page from which four-column headlines flung at him the condensed facts of the previous night's tragedy. With teeth ground together he read the story below, and, having reached the end, read it through again with forced attention to every lurid feature detailed with reportorial facility. Then he folded the paper carefully, instinctively trying, by turning the front page in, to hide the horror to that pitiful extent, and, laying it upon the table, resumed his pacing up and down the room.

A clock in the hall struck six. The clinking of glasses on a tray carried by a maid past his door to the dining room caught his ear, and he started. Water! The man in the locked room upstairs, devoured by pain and fever, had no water. It was nearly four hours since he had left him there. He hurried upstairs to his own room, and upon emerging into the corridor carrying a small pitcher filled from his bathroom faucet was met by the man who, in his not elaborate establishment, filled the double rôle of house man and chauffeur. He halted before his employer, looking worried:

"Sorry to trouble you, Mr. Stanley, that is—Bishop—sir—"

"That's all right, Fred. The old name will do. What's the matter?"

"There's two men down in the yard, sir, officers. They want to search the garage."



"What do they want to do that for?"

The bishop spoke easily, pleasantly, with an interrogative smile.

"There ~~was~~ a revenue officer killed last night on the river, shot by a bootlegger. Perhaps you heard the boys calling the extras."

"I did hear something about it. Well?"

"The man got away, and they're hunting him."

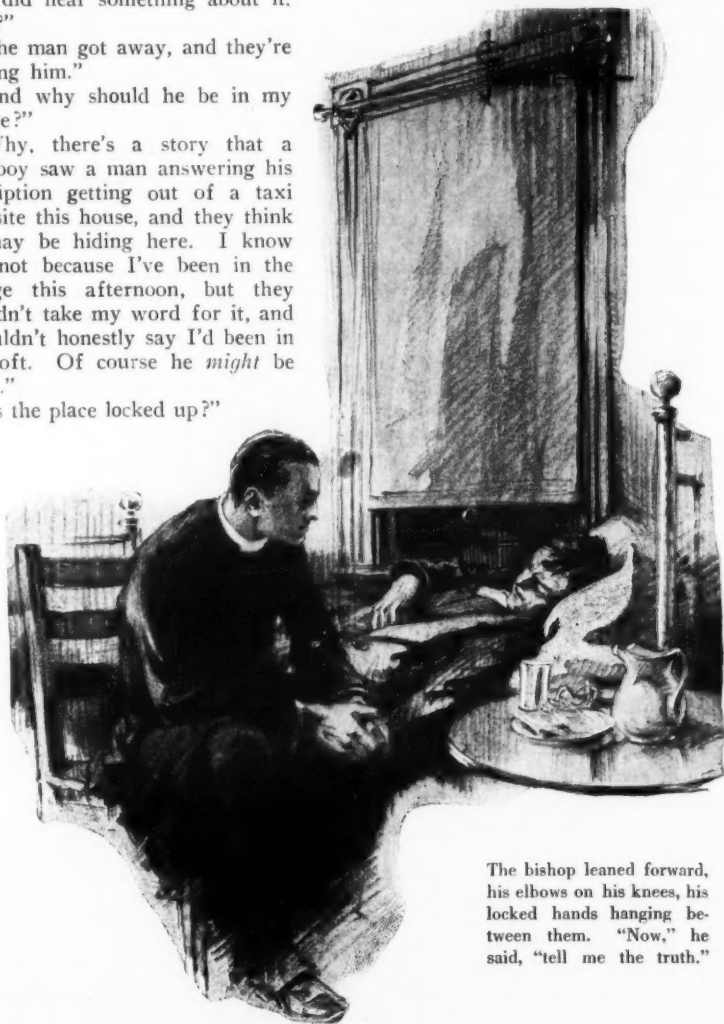
"And why should he be in my garage?"

"Why, there's a story that a newsboy saw a man answering his description getting out of a taxi opposite this house, and they think he may be hiding here. I know he's not because I've been in the garage this afternoon, but they wouldn't take my word for it, and I couldn't honestly say I'd been in the loft. Of course he *might* be there."

"Is the place locked up?"

"Yes, sir. I have the key in my pocket, but I told them I was coming to get it because I wanted to speak to you about it."

"I have no objection to their searching. You can tell them so. The man's not likely to be there."



The bishop leaned forward, his elbows on his knees, his locked hands hanging between them. "Now," he said, "tell me the truth."

"No, sir. Did you want something in that pitcher, sir?"

"No. Better answer the bell before you go out, Fred. Martha doesn't seem to hear."

The man descended the front stairs, and Stanley stood, pitcher in hand, listening tensely to the sound of arrival in the hall below. It was the bishop and the dean who were to be his house guests, and who had wearied more quickly than they expected of the turmoil of the streets. Stanley returned the pitcher to his room and went forward to greet them as they ascended.

"I'll show the gentlemen their rooms, Fred. You'd better attend to that matter outside."

Old Bishop Lyle sank into the lounging chair by the window in his room and motioned to his host to sit down also.

"Stay a while, Carter. I haven't had a chance for a dozen words with you to-day, and it's—let see how long?—three years since we met at Indianapolis. I'm not likely to get so far as that from home again. I'm getting to be an old man, Carter, an old man. These seething streets of yours bring it home to me. There's a fearful unrest in them, an effect of a muttering volcano. I ask myself if it's I who have changed, or the world. But I think it's the world. Sit down, Stanley, sit down. Don't let the restless spirit get its hold upon you."

Stanley put his hand upon his old friend's shoulder.

"I'll be back in a few minutes. Then you shall talk to me and exorcise the evil spirit. We'll have half an hour before we dress."

He went into the hall. Upon the shelves of a closet near the locked room, Martha was arranging freshly delivered linen. The quantity in the basket on the floor beside her foretold a task of some minutes at least. It was probable that Mrs. Leonard, absorbed in prepa-

ration for the dinner, had forgotten his earlier visitor, but for the master of the house, who should be wholly occupied with his guests, to enter the unused room and personally wait upon its occupant, could not but attract attention. With police at this moment on the premises it would be too great a risk. The bishop walked uncertainly half the length of the hall, then returned to the room he had just left.

In fifteen minutes he excused himself again, and again securing the water opened his door to find himself once more faced by Fred. The man's puzzled glance at the pitcher brought a flush to his cheek. He felt as though he had been detected in an unlawful act by his own servant, and had to strangle an absurd impulse to make some explanation. His voice had a note of unusual impatience as he queried:

"Well? What happened?"

"They're gone, sir. They searched every corner of the place, looked under the seats of the car, and crawled all over the loft. A mouse couldn't have hid from them."

"Are they satisfied?"

"Well, they know he's not here. But they're sure he's in the vicinity somewhere. He was hurt, and they say he couldn't have got far without some one to help him. And the boy is sure he got out in front of the church and turned this way. There's a thousand dollars reward for any one who gives information that will lead to finding him. Wish I could earn it."

"It wouldn't be pleasant money, Fred."

"Well, I don't know, sir. Those fellows are getting too bold. They're bringing the whisky over by the boat-load, and they shoot on sight. If one of them could be made an example of——"

The bishop stepped back into his room and closed the door. As he stood in the middle of the floor, he thought

he heard a faint moan. He bent his head, listening, but the walls of the old house were thick, and the sound, if real, did not again reach his ear. He could hear the voice of Fred outside the door in colloquy with Mrs. Leonard, who was instructing him as to his duties in helping to serve the dinner. Fred was a recently acquired member of his household. His loyalty had yet to be proved. A thousand dollars was a lot of money to be earned by a word.

The glass of water beside the host's plate stood untouched throughout the long dinner. Interspersed with subjects less secular there was some decorously jocular reference to days when glasses were more numerous and exhilarating, but the eight men who approved Mrs. Leonard's menu-making were also a unit in approval of the absence of liquors from this and other dinner tables, and horror was freely expressed at the crime which every evening paper recited with feverish minuteness.

"Some one claims to have seen the murderer get out of a car in front of the church," Dean Murdoch said. "Not a very probable clew, but a big reward is a wonderful quickener of imagination."

"Poor wretch!" Bishop Lyle's tone held a measure of compassion. "If the guess is correct he may be hiding, like a beast, almost within sound of our voices, fearing us as a fox fears the hounds." The old man sighed, and his voice dropped to a soliloquizing rather than a conversational note. "A roomful of God's sworn servitors, and not one to whom this outcast, even though repentant, would dare turn. And who knows how he came to be what he is?"

Some one took up the words as a challenge: was it not the business, one of the first duties of the church, to uphold the laws of the land?

"Assuredly, assuredly," the old bishop gently concurred, "but——"

The subject was seized and flung back and forth in argumentative shuttlecock. The host took no part in the discussion. He was careful of the demands of hospitality, but contributed little to the conversation even when it turned to diocesan problems which would soon be his own to unravel. Those of his guests who had not intimately known him before secretly theorized as to how a man so unbrilliant had so early reached an eminence they had failed to attain. There was such a thing as "pull" in all professions, and Senator Forsythe's connection with wealthy and powerful church officeholders was well known.

It was eleven o'clock when the last outgoing guest left and the two house guests went to their rooms. Stanley bade them good night, saying he was going to his study for a short time before retiring. He did so, but it was to sit with the door open and ears strained to greet the total silence which at last reigned throughout the house. Then with tread as light as he could make it, he went to the dining room and searched for food. He could find nothing upon the sideboard but biscuits and fruit. These he put upon a tray, avoiding the clink of china by dispensing with it, and literally stole up the stairs to his own room. To the burden of the tray he added the twice-rejected pitcher of water, and set the whole cautiously upon a table outside the locked room while he inserted and turned the key.

A faint stir came from the darkness surrounding the bed. He closed the door with careful soundlessness and switched on the light. Relief was his first feeling as he saw beside the bed the large pitcher which, by some chance, in the unused room had been filled with water. The mug beside it showed that the suffering man had at least been spared the misery of thirst. Still dressed he lay upon the mattress, the wounded limb supported by a pillow he



The girl started, her pale cheeks crimsoning. Then she smiled, a very sweet and understanding smile. "I have not lived here a month without learning that you are a brother to all humanity that needs you."

had thrust under it. The eyes, sunken lakes of fear and misery, met Stanley's with appeal which was half defiance.

"What time is it?" he whispered.

"Midnight." Stanley set the tray upon a table. His manner was calm and matter of fact. "This is all I could find in the way of food. Can you eat these biscuits?"

"Give me the orange."

Stanley peeled and quartered it, handing the pieces to the sick man, who devoured them greedily. Then he ate some fragments of biscuit, washing it down with a draft of the fresher water. No further word was spoken until, the food being set aside, the bishop sat down beside the bed. He leaned forward, his elbows on his knees, his locked hands hanging between them.

"Now," he said, "tell me the truth."

"No one can possibly overhear?"

"No one."

The man spoke in a low, rasping voice, sinking from time to time to a sibilant whisper:

"I've been in this business two months. I say 'business' because it is a business, a big one, and it's carried on in a big way. Yes, and by men that you call respectable. The fellows in it don't believe in these dry laws. They voted against them. They've as good a right as the other fellows to make the laws. It's as much their country. There are little dealers that dodge around in the woods on the Canadian shore and will sell you anything from a pocketful to a case, but the big fellows call themselves brokers. I got an offer from one of them to work for him. They employ carriers to bring the stuff over. They furnish their men with motor boats, and they have trucks on this side to take the cargo away. They pay big money for the work, and they ought to. It's dangerous. You hang around the Canadian side until you get a flash-light signal. Then you run in to shore and get your load. Or you

may have to go over and secure the cargo first and have another man bring the boat over for you. Perhaps you're being watched, and if you suspect it, you've got to put off downstream and hide your load in the marsh until another night.

"Last night I'd got over into American water before I found I was being chased. I hit up the best speed I could and made for a dock far down the river where we had things fixed in case of trouble. The boat had three men in it, and I wasn't sure they were liquor hounds, but I wasn't taking any chances. I had a good lead on them and would have beaten them to the landing if my engine hadn't started trouble. While I was fixing it, they overhauled me and I saw they were revenue officers. They called for me to halt. I didn't, but my boat wasn't going half her speed, and when they got within a few yards they yelled to me to stop or they would shoot. Just then my engine started up. I knew I could beat them to the shore and get away myself even if they got the cargo, so I let her go. But one of the men stood up and took aim at me. The other two were crouching down. I didn't want to kill him, but it was his life or mine. I shot first, but he let go as he dropped and the bullet tore through my leg. He fell into the water, and the other men had to stop the boat to get him out. While they were doing it I made my get-away, and the fellows who had been watching the fight from the landing pulled me ashore, shoved me into an automobile, and sent me to a road house that we thought was safe. But they had been raided only two days before and had lost their nerve, and when the news was telephoned us in the morning that the officer was dead and the whole force hunting me, they told me I had to get out.

"I hadn't been in the business long enough to have many friends who could

be trusted. I was in horrible pain, and being a cripple marked me. The two men in the boat had seen that I was hit, and they had flashed me and gave a pretty fair description of what I looked like. I didn't know where to go. Then I thought of you. When I took this job I never intended to go near you, and of course I dropped my own name, but I knew you were rector of this church, and your house would be about the last one on earth I would be looked for in. If I'd had time to think, perhaps I wouldn't have done it, but there wasn't a minute. Those skunks said: 'Get out, and get out quick.' I said: 'Get me a taxi.' They put some bandages on my leg, shoved me in, and never asked where I was going.

"I didn't give the man your address. Just gave him your street and told him to drive along it. When I saw all that raft of people going into the church it looked like a good place to get out and lose myself in the crowd before going to your door. Then it occurred to me that you would likely be in the church, and there would be no better place to hide until I could see you. I guess I was right. I didn't know what was up, but even the clever police wouldn't expect to find a rum runner at a—what do you call it?—a consecration. They made a bishop of you, didn't they?"

He paused. There was a tremulousness in his last words into which he tried to inject a sneer, but he flung his arm across his eyes and writhed into another position, and so lay for some moments. Stanley sat silent and moveless.

"You've climbed pretty high in the last ten years," the man continued, throwing his arm out across the bed with a gesture of recklessness, "and I've sunk pretty low. But if you're smart enough to be a bishop, you ought to be smart enough to know what to do

with a man in a fix like mine. Suppose he is a bootlegger and a sinner, a bishop's job is to look after sinners, isn't it? I heard you making some very fine promises to that effect to-day."

Stanley leaned back in his chair and met with stern eyes the other man's defiant gaze.

"A bishop's duty is to turn a bootlegger, who is also a homicide, over to the authorities to be dealt with according to the laws of the land."

"To send him to the devil, in fact, by way of a life sentence in an earthly hell. That's simple. And it clears the bishop's skirts. The road-house crooks did better than that."

Stanley rose and stood looking down at the figure on the bed.

"Lawrence," he said, "is there no repentance in your soul for this crime you have committed?"

"Repentance!" the other cried fiercely; then in terror at the noise his anger had betrayed him into making, his voice sank to a whisper no less fierce. "Rot! I've been driven along all my life by something inside of me, something that was never inside of you. Oh, I've been doing some thinking lying here to-day while you entertained your brothers. I've *had* to do things that you never wanted to do, and those things have forced me into doing what I didn't want to do. I didn't want to kill that man. But I was where I had to do it. I was on the down grade and I couldn't stop even when I saw the precipice ahead. What do you know about it, standing on the level ground at the top of the hill?"

The illustration afforded the last words by the tall figure sternly towering above the writhing prostrate one touched the bishop's consciousness, and compassion flooded his face as he stooped and moved the wounded limb into another posture.

"I want to get your clothes off and see what condition this leg is in. While



you're undressing, I'll straighten up the bed and then I'll take the bandages off and look at it."

With some assistance the man reached the chair, but when again on the bed he groaned in agony as Stanley attempted to remove the bandage. Angry swelling was apparent above and below it.

"Let it alone. I can't stand the pain. It may be better in the morning."

But the bishop tiptoed to his bathroom and, obtaining warm water, continued his ministrations, removing the blood-soaked linen, bathing the lacerated and inflamed flesh, then rebinding with strips torn from a pillow cover. The man's stifled moans ceased, and he sighed with some measure of relief, then dropped into a doze of utter exhaustion.

Stanley sat down again by the bed, and with his hand over his eyes thought intently. When he roused to look at his watch it was three o'clock. The sick man had been sleeping for an hour, but at his companion's movement he started and awoke.

Stanley bent forward and spoke kindly:

"I have decided what to do for the present. That leg of yours must be attended to. There is a nurse in the house, a very capable person. She has been taking care of my housekeeper's little girl, who has been ill. The child is convalescent and Miss Marsh was going away in a day or two. She is a good nurse, and not talkative. She will know how serious this damage is, and if necessary I will have her stay here and take care of you."

"You will tell her——" the man gasped.

"I will tell her that I have a sick man here who had come to me for help. In my profession that is nothing extraordinary. It is useless for you to protest, Lawrence. Whatever risk there may be in this plan, it is nothing to that

of my looking after you myself, even if I could do so. You must trust my judgment and do as I say."

The cheerful twitter of sparrows in the ivy mingled with less articulate sounds which, like the lazy yawn of the awakening city, drifted through the open window to where Carter Stanley and Mary Marsh stood at either side of the bed in the locked room. The nurse was carefully ascertaining the condition of her new patient, her cool, investigating fingers pressing skillfully here and there, her eyes from time to time scanning his face for indications of pain or relief. She stood erect presently, looking down at the prone figure, whatever expression might have been in her face hidden behind the curtain of professional neutrality. When she spoke it was to the bishop, abruptly:

"This is a gunshot wound. The bullet seems to have gone in here"—she touched the limb again—"and out here. I should think it probable that the bone is splintered. The inflammation is so great it is hard to tell. It ought to have surgical attention at once."

The sick man's eyes rolled fearfully to Stanley's face. The terror in them was unmistakable. The bishop responded quietly:

"We will have whatever is necessary done. In the meantime, Miss Marsh, do what you can with fresh dressings to make him comfortable. I am going downstairs to get them to make me a cup of coffee, and I would then like to see you in my study. Will you wait for me there? I am sorry to have had to wake you so early."

His grave, courteous smile illuminated the deadly pallor of his face. The professional curtain lifted for an instant as Miss Marsh's eyes met his. The expression which looked out was startled pity.

When he entered his study half an

hour later she was standing by the window where he had stood yesterday, and she was reading the first page of the paper he had left upon the table. She laid it down, folding it as she had found it. Seeing the action, the blood rushed to Stanley's face, but his voice was steady as he sat down before his desk and motioned the nurse to a chair opposite him. She stood a moment, her hand upon its back, her brows slightly drawn together, as though so engrossed by some new thought as to be scarcely aware of his expressed wish. She was a tall young woman of twenty-eight or thirty, with a splendidly healthy physique, a rather square face, and deep-set gray eyes. At first glance she was colorless, but her wide, firm mouth was healthily red, and her strong, even teeth flashingly white. At the second look children always went to her.

"Miss Marsh, I want you to tell me exactly what you think of the condition of the man upstairs."

The nurse sat down. Her answer was quietly decisive:

"I think it is a very serious wound. Blood poisoning or other trouble might easily set in. We should have a doctor at once."

"Do you object to taking charge of the case?"

"Not at all. I am open now for an engagement."

"But you do not feel competent to handle it alone?"

"Not with safety to the patient. He might lose his limb. I think he would unquestionably be crippled more or less for life."

Stanley took up a pencil and abstractedly made marks upon the blotter before him. Suddenly he flung it down and rose, standing with his shoulders against the mantelpiece.

"Miss Marsh, you have been in my house a month, and I have seen and heard much of your helpfulness. I am going to ask now that you help me."

She looked at him silently, waiting for him to continue.

"The man upstairs is my——" He stopped. The tendril fingers of the vine at the windowpane tapped several seconds away. Then he quietly finished, "my brother."

The girl started, her pale cheeks crimsoning. Then she smiled, a very sweet and understanding smile.

"I have not lived here a month without learning that you are a brother to all humanity that needs you."

"I am speaking of a human, not a spiritual relationship. He is my father's son. A report reached me years ago that he was dead, lost with a party in Alaska, and I had come to believe it true. Now he is sick and in trouble and he has come to me for help. He is exceedingly averse to having a surgeon called in because he does not wish to see any one. Rather than have his identity disclosed to any human being other than myself, he would suffer, be a cripple, even risk death. But we must not let him die. Can you conscientiously undertake his care for a few days, using your own best skill, and watching his symptoms so that should they become too alarming we may override his objections and obtain other aid? In doing this you would have to admit no one to his room but yourself, and to use the utmost discretion in keeping them out. If you feel that it is wrong for you to do this, say so unhesitatingly. The whole matter comes to this: knowing what I have told you, and no more, are you willing to trust me? Is it 'yes' or 'no'?"

The little frown between the nurse's eyes had appeared again as she listened. But she met his gaze steadily.

"It is 'yes,' Bishop Stanley."

"Thank you. Say 'Mr.' Stanley, please. Now will you get whatever you require for your new work, and never leave your patient's room without locking the door?"

Mary Marsh rose to go. The bishop stepped forward to open the door for her. As he approached she turned and held out her hand. It clasped his firmly.

"You may trust me, Mr. Stanley," she said.

As he closed the door behind the blue-clad figure, Carter Stanley felt as though an intolerable burden had been suddenly eased by a willing shoulder placed beside his own.

The bell for house prayers summoned him once more to his duties as priest and host. The routine of church services and parish work was in charge of his curate, but every moment of the morning was crowded. When Fred had been dispatched with the two guests to a midday train the new bishop entered his study and rang for his housekeeper.

"Mrs. Leonard, I do not wish to be disturbed this afternoon on any consideration whatever. No matter who calls say that I am engaged. I will need no dinner."

"Can't I send you a tray, sir? Just an egg, or some bouillon? You ate no lunch."

"Nothing, thank you."

He closed the door and locked it.

When he came out the evening shadows were settling about the old church, and inside it was almost dark. He entered by a side door and made his way toward the altar before which he had yesterday made his vows. As he did so he heard the organist descending from the organ loft, saw the glimmer of electric light switched out, and heard the door communicating with the church open and shut.

There in the silence and darkness, except for a faint light from the altar window, he remained for an hour alone with his God.

Miss Gertrude Forsythe sat in her favorite seat under a great oak tree

near the foot of the gentle slope which greenly undulated from the terrace of the senator's luxurious summer home down to within a few hundred yards of the lake. The sun was dipping its last rays in the water before plunging wholly under it, and either the lengthening shadows were reflected in Miss Forsythe's eyes or some inward reflection darkened their usually unshadowed blue. In her lap was a silken bag from which she had taken some filmy pretense of work, but her fingers were idle. Presently they drew from the bag a note which she unfolded and read with the languid interest accorded a thrice-perused communication:

LOVED ONE: I cannot be with you this evening as we had planned. To-morrow I shall come about the usual time. Will you arrange that we may have an hour undisturbed? I have much to say to you, and must see you alone. C. S.

She put the letter back in its envelope, and sat looking at the big, legible letters forming her name. Presently she smiled with greater contentment. After all, that clear open writing was like the writer. At times his directness amounted to a troublesome simplicity which delivered him into the hands of less transparent natures, but with a wife who, while physically straight-visioned, could mentally see from several angles at the same time, he ought to climb far and fast in influence and importance. Yet she had to admit occasions when she had faced a locked corner of his heart, and when, upon her knocking, he had turned the key, and she had found herself an alien within, forced to pretend an understanding of the treasures he showed her. Whether her pretense wholly deceived him she was never quite sure. But when, upon the evening before, Fred had brought her these three lines, she had been put out. She had an uneasy premonition that this was perhaps the supreme occasion when she would be

called upon for flights at the thought of which her soul's callow wings drooped. Last night, still thrilled by the impressive ceremonial of the day before, she had been keyed up to a sympathetic fervor which surely must have satisfied any man, even any saint, but now the fervor had cooled. She wanted some comfortable, human love-making, some practical discussion of a future that she, at least, intended should be brilliant in a very human sense. Between the lines of this short note she thought she read that he had not yet descended from the heights, and that she might be forced to spend the evening treading upon air while her feet yearned for the solid paths they knew how to follow in safety.

The sun had made his plunge, and the lake was gathering the wandering shadows to its bosom when she saw Stanley's tall figure appear upon the terrace and, searching her out, come striding down the slope. She rose and made a pretty obeisance before extending her hand.

"Welcome, your Right Reverence," she said, and smiled adorably up at him with tempting lips.

A pleasure launch was dancing by, its occupants within eyereach of the shore, and she was not surprised that Stanley offered no greeting beyond the continued clasp of his hand as he sat down beside her. Her dress was of a blue which deepened that of her eyes, its filmy veiling of her lovely shoulders making their beauty more alluring. The breeze played with the bronze tendrils of her hair, but so lightly as not to unbecomingly disarrange them. The natural color in her cheek was that of the blush rose rather than the lily, and if at times artificially heightened the touch was so skillfully applied that even the scrutiny of a lover's eyes had never detected it. She slipped into his disengaged hand the letter she had been holding.

"Take back the cruel words that disappointed me last night."

His eyes lingered over her.

"Did they disappoint you much?"

"Now that you are here I will forget them."

He sat silent, his clasp tightening until his hand gripped hers painfully. The little launch had disappeared, and suddenly he flung his arm about her, crushing her to his side. He did not stoop his lips to hers, but he laid his cheek against her hair.

"Am I, then, necessary to you, Gertrude?" he asked hoarsely.

"Have I not told you so?" she whispered.

"And I must give you up." The words caught in his throat, but his eyes were dry.

For a half dozen breaths she did not move, then she slowly withdrew from his arm and faced him from the other end of the rustic seat. If Gertrude's maid had been less skillful, there would have been no color in her cheek.

"If I heard right," she said at last slowly, "what do you mean?"

The man's face dropped in his hands, his elbows on his knees. When he lifted his face again its haggardness shocked her.

"You did not hear right," he said. "What I meant to say was that you are free to give me up if you desire it."

"Why should I desire it?"

"Because you expected to marry a man honored, whether deservedly or not, in his profession, and to fill a position yourself of which you could justly be proud."

"And what has happened that I should expect otherwise?"

"To-day I forwarded my resignation to the House of Bishops."

He had regained his quietude and spoke with slow composure, not looking at her, his gaze upon the crimson glory of the clouds which melted into their own reflection in the water.

Gertrude Forsythe sat in stony silence. Now, less than before, did she believe her ears. Then her lips parted, and she drew a breath, half relief, half anxiety. She moved toward him, laying her hand upon his arm.

"Carter, you have been overworking. You are not yourself."

"You think that I am under some delusion. I wish that were so, but it is not."

"But—what—why? Such a thing is not possible. How can you resign a position that you have not yet assumed?"

"That is why I have resigned now. I will not assume duties that I cannot conscientiously perform."

Miss Forsythe became suddenly and impatiently aware that she was being asked to take the greatest flight yet demanded of her, and that she had neither wings nor the desire for them. Her tone held growing anger as well as astonishment:

"And you have taken this extraordinary step without even consulting me?"

"Gertrude, there was One only whom I could consult in a matter that lay between my soul and its Maker."

When the girl spoke again her indignation was not hot, but icy. She had once more withdrawn to the farthest corner of the seat.

"And your plans for the future? I suppose they have also been completed without consulting me."

"I shall go far to the West. If the church will accept my service, I will take up some humble mission work. If not, I can still work among those whom the church never reaches. There are so many of them—so many." The yearning of his voice was reflected in his eyes as he turned to her, but it found no response in hers. "I will leave here sooner than I had planned, before the new rector arrives, probably next week. I can make no explanation, and I dare not expect your forgiveness, but

if you ever loved me, Gertrude, pity me now."

He stood up, and she also rose, the shadows under the great tree falling about them. In the dimming light he thought he saw some quiver of emotion in her face, and moved as though he would stretch out his hands to her, but she drew back, her head haughty, her voice hard.

"You will, of course, see my father at once. You may tell him that while this matter affects my pride, it does not affect my heart. I have realized for some time that your conception of life and mine are very far apart. I agree with you that it is best we should separate now and forever."

"Gertrude!" But she left him, walking slowly up the slope to the house without a backward look.

Bishop Lyle had been ill, and was convalescing at his little summer retreat on the Massachusetts coast. He sat before a merrily sputtering driftwood fire; beside him was his friend, Dean Murdoch, the contrast of whose stocky frame and humorous, worldly-wise face made more apparent the fast thinning body and transparent features through which the gentle spirit of the old man shone more clearly day by day. The dean had just returned from a trip which had brought him within view of the Pacific coast.

"I spent a week looking over the work in Montana," he said, "and, by the way, whom do you think I ran across out there?"

"I'm a poor hand at guessing, my boy."

"That extraordinary fellow, Carter Stanley. You remember, it's just a year since he stirred up his sensation and vanished."

"Very well I remember. I loved that boy, Murdoch. He wrote me at the time, the most beautiful letter I ever read, but it shed no light upon the mys-

tery, and I never heard from him after. Tell me about him."

"We were up in the mountains visiting an outlying mission, when some one spoke of a place farther on where Carter Stanley is doing a wonderful hospital work, assisted by a young woman called Marsh. Of course they know his story out there, and that his incomprehensible resignation as bishop was accepted as resignation from the church, but he's making so tremendously good in this new work, and it's so badly needed, that nobody asks questions any more. It was a nasty bit of road to get to him from where we were, rising about two thousand feet in three miles. Not so bad in summer, but in winter they say, when it's ice-coated, it's treacherous traveling. There are lots of accidents, and when there are accidents at the mines it's hard to get help to them." The miners up there are a rough bunch, too, mostly foreign. It takes a two-fisted as well as a big-hearted man to handle them. He talks to them on Sundays, Stanley does—he doesn't call it preaching—in a shack near the hospital, but the hospital itself is quite a decent building, and he has gathered a very fair staff of assistants there. This Miss Marsh is at the head of it. A fine woman. I had quite a talk with her. She spoke highly of Stanley's work. It occurred to me that she'd be a more suitable helpmeet for a man of Stanley's caliber than Miss Forsythe would ever have been. Perhaps it'll work out that way. I saw in yesterday's paper that Miss Gertrude has landed an ambassador. That'll please the senator a lot better than any bishop for a son-in-law. Did you know that Stanley has a brother?"

"I know he did have one."

"What sort was he?"

"Never were two boys more unlike. There was no scrape Lawrence didn't

get into. When the scandal arose about Carter some people who knew the family history thought the same bad streak had broken out in him, but no one could make *me* believe that. They had an unwise father, and no woman's influence, no mother or sisters. It didn't affect Carter, but harshness drove Lawrence from bad to worse. Finally he landed in jail for several months. That finished their father. He died soon afterward and left everything he had to Carter. Carter had just entered the ministry, and he made a last effort to get hold of his brother—I know he did, for I was in his confidence—but Lawrence had started for Alaska when he heard of the will, and the next thing Carter heard was that the party he was with had lost their liver. That was ten or twelve years ago. And you say he has turned up again?"

"He certainly has. I heard Stanley call him Lawrence. He's a moody-looking chap, and badly crippled—probably the result of whatever happened to him in Alaska—but he has charge of part of the work at the hospital, and he follows Stanley about like a dog. I watched him while his brother was talking to the miners on Sunday, and there was a look in his face that was mighty close to worship. Whatever caused Carter Stanley's amazing action it wasn't that he had gone either bad or mad. The surmises at the time were about evenly divided between the two as I remember. I suppose it was just one of those quirks in human nature which are unexplainable."

The old bishop rested his silvered head against the dark padding of his chair and fitted his delicate finger tips together as he gazed into the embers.

"Not unexplainable, Murdoch," he said. "Nothing in human experience is unexplainable, could we know the whole truth. But many things in this life are unexplained. This is one of them."



# The Chameleon

By Marguerite Aspinwall

Author of "The Red Cross Plot in Arden," "The Same Old Peter," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY CLARENCE ROWE

**Have you ever known a likable young man who, in his nature, resembled nothing so much as a human chameleon? Perhaps his seeming fickleness was less reprehensible than you thought. This story of Jimmie Talbot will help you to understand him.**

JIMMIE TALBOT opened his eyes with an effort only to shut them again hastily, as though even the gray morning light struggling through the drawn curtains at the window was too strong for them.

He had been lying there motionless for quite a long time, in that lethargic state which is midway between sleep and consciousness, trying to summon sufficient energy to drag himself into complete wakefulness by the simple action of lifting his heavy eyelids. Vaguely he resented this necessity, but he was kept from drifting back luxuriously into the dreams just behind him by a formless and entirely chaotic sense of something momentous having happened, something which urgently demanded remembrance and consideration.

He moved his head restlessly and a little streak of pain, like a thin, searing flame, shot from his neck up the back of his head, and down again, two or three times. He lay still abruptly, drawing a long breath, and the pain quieted also.

Very cautiously then, holding his head rigid on the pillow, Jimmie lifted his right hand and explored with groping finger tips. The fingers encountered, to their surprise, a neat gauze bandage fastened over one ear with three almost infinitesimal safety pins.

Oddly enough it was the touch of the

safety pins which convinced him that he had definitely emerged into the waking world once more. He seemed, all at once, to remember somebody making a gay little joke about those pins, when they were put in the bandage. Only what the joke had been, or who had made it, for the moment, eluded him. He frowned with the effort to recall.

"But I've been hurt somehow," he said aloud haltingly, as if the spoken words were something tangible to hold to. "A—a fall or—wait—it's coming back. There was mud on the curb, and—light suddenly—lots of it. Headlights of a car I think."

He moved again, heedless of the pain, which seemed less with its second warning. He had it at last. The remembrance of the way those two headlights had glared in his startled face did it. There had been mud on the curb, as he thought. His foot had slipped, and the big car had swung suddenly around the corner beside him.

Probably his head had struck the sharp edge of the curbing. He was quite sure the car itself had not touched him; in any case, it hadn't stopped. He had been alone in the dark street, Zoë's street. Of course! It was Zoë who had made the gay little joke about the safety pins. That was on account of his having teased her because once he had caught her pinning buttons on her coat instead of sewing them. He'd

never seen Zoë with a needle and thimble.

After that—Jimmie's heart missed a beat spasmodically, and began to hammer racingly against his side as the rest of the scene came back in slow, tantalizing fragments. Suddenly she had been in his arms, her soft hair, which had the exact shine of sunlight on old copper, touching his chin and cheek, her face hidden for a long minute against his shoulder. And still later there had been a happy, half-ashamed and smothered whisper:

"I never meant you to see *first*. But I was so frightened, I forgot everything a girl ought to remember. Tell me again you—love me, Jimmie."

He had said it no less fervently before, before last evening, he had never dreamed of saying it to her. They had been chums, wonderful man-to-man pals, but he had not thought of anything more.

If he had thought of any girl in that way, it would have been Constance. He repeated the name aloud, the softness of first recollection dying out of his eyes, and a kind of incredulous horror growing in its place.

He had forgotten Constance.

He sat up abruptly in bed, his eyes staring at the gray daylight outside.

"I couldn't have done *that*. I don't claim to have been perfect, by a long shot, but I've never been the utter blackguard I'd have to be if— Only I'm not dreaming, I suppose, and my head seems clear again. Too damn clear for comfort."

He drew his hand across his eyes angrily, violently, as if he would, by the gesture, shut out the sight of something which was filling him with a stunned and very unpleasant sort of astonishment. That something happened to be himself.

Any honest attempt at describing James Newton Talbot must be prefaced

by the statement that he had the rare gift of seeing himself as others saw him. And that, in turn, was mainly because he possessed a still rarer and more dangerous faculty for making them see him as he saw himself. Of course, if you think it over, they come to the same thing, temporarily, at any rate.

His features were not remarkable, except for his eyes, a deep gray, and very expressive; almost indecently so for gray eyes. In addition, he was twenty-five, an orphan, and possessed of an income which, though it might even have been termed luxurious for one, would certainly necessitate a number of unpleasant curtailments and loppings off if it were to be adapted to two. Up to this time Jimmie had not considered the subject of such curtailments seriously.

And then, that same spring he met Constance Monroe and Zoë Westgate.

Usually he managed his flirtations circumspectly, and with a nice regard for all the little unwritten rules of the game. Which means that he never rushed more than one girl at a time, and was careful always to draw back before matters became uncomfortably involved on either side, accomplishing, moreover, such a masterpiece of strategic retreat that the girl invariably appeared to have been doing the retreating—sometimes a little to her own surprise, it must be admitted.

Probably on this occasion trouble arose from the fact that Jimmie did not at once recognize his two latest affairs as flirtations, and so was unprepared for what followed, though he may even have had a hazy notion tucked away somewhere that it wouldn't be a bad thing if his attentions to Constance did turn out seriously. Constance Monroe was a young woman to impel serious consideration, whether from the viewpoint of her own charming self, her background of conservative old Boston



She took her work seriously and read Jimmie long lectures, which amused him mightily, on his attitude toward his own profession.

family, or her father's recently amassed war millions.

She was just nineteen, and had been out a year, a quite devastating and

successful year from all accounts, through which, while acquiring a pleasing veneer of poise and society small talk, she had kept intact a certain alluring naïveté in her attitude toward life.

In appearance, upbringing, and general disposition Constance Monroe and Miss Westgate were as totally unlike as two girls, who are of approximately the same age and social strata, may well be.

For one thing, Zoë Westgate was a bohemian to the tips of her clever artist's fingers, and the gulf between East and West, as every one knows who knows anything at all, is as nothing to that fixed between Bohemia and Boston.

She was two or three years older than Constance, though she didn't look it. Being little and thin and restless, she often gave the impression, at first sight, of a hobbledohoy but rather interesting child, whose greenish-gray eyes were several sizes too big for the rest of her, and whose impudent nose, with a sprinkling of gold-colored freckles across the upturned tip, seemed to challenge an amused world to dispute her right to her own opinions. Her mouth, however, was a contrast to the other features in that it was mobile and soft and altogether femininely provocative—a woman's mouth, not a child's.

She called herself, gayly, the black sheep of her family, an epithet echoed, in tremulous whispers, behind fragile, blue-veined old hands, by the grandmother and three angular maiden aunts down in Charleston, South Carolina, who had brought her up, and now stood quiveringly aghast at the unprecedented result of their efforts.

Dear Zoë, an artist and living alone in New York. No Westgate had ever done such a thing before.

"But they're such ducks, all four of them," Zoë had explained to Jimmie Talbot, with a laugh and a little sigh, the first time they talked to each other intimately about their pasts, presents,

and ambitions for the future. It was their second meeting, and across a tiny, candlelighted tea table somewhere in Greenwich Village. "It's more as if they were something very lovely and rare taken bodily out of the last century," she explained further. "Now me, I'm altogether of the present day, so you see we simply didn't fit. I want my chance at living. It's not living, what I came away from; it's just a kind of beautiful, peaceful dreaming. All the ugly present-day problems shut out, all the restlessness. It is a restless age, isn't it? That's why I'm glad I was born in it. I hate vegetating. I want to strike out, and—and explore life, do things, *feel* them, too, while I'm doing them. Live each minute sixty seconds full. Do you remember that line of Kipling's:

"If you can fill the unforgiving minute,  
With sixty seconds worth of distance  
run—

"That comes nearest to being my creed of anything I've ever read."

Zoë sat back, her fingers interwoven tensely on the table edge, her eyes very bright in the candlelight.

"I've talked an awful lot of sentimental nonsense," she said, her tone suddenly shamefaced, "What must you think of me? Only, I'm not usually so expansive with strangers. I don't know what possessed me to-day."

"Yes, but," Jimmie said quickly, his eyes at their most expressive, "I don't want to run in the stranger class. Please go on. You're an artist, aren't you? I do a little in that line myself, on the side. Not that I'll ever amount to much at it, but at least it makes us sort of comrades of the road; couldn't we call it that?"

He was rather pleased with the phrase and repeated it in a warmer tone.

"I knew," he added, "when I first met you, looking at that queerish sketch of Paula's that nobody else seemed to

like, that we were going to be friends, because we were sure to find we'd a lot in common. And the only way to find out how much is to forget the usual commonplaces that don't get you anywhere."

Zoë nodded.

"Oh," she said, in quite a fierce voice, "I don't suppose you have any idea what it's like to find a—people that talk your language. Nobody at home ever thought of trying."

They looked at each other across the table, exhilarated with a new sense of kinship which subtly excluded the chattering tea drinkers around them.

"Suppose," Zoë burst out suddenly, with a tiny expressive shiver, "that I had stayed in Charleston and let them smother me, little by little, with their peacefulness and their beautiful hot-house kind of life that they think is living. Suppose I hadn't come away; it wasn't easy to do, you know."

"I know," Jimmie said sympathetically, if a bit vaguely. His thoughts were more engaged with Zoë herself than with Zoë's words. He was wondering why he had been so sure before that she wasn't pretty. Or, perhaps, charm was the word that described her best. He'd heard that Southern girls possessed that in plenty. But Zoë was somehow different from all the Southern girls he had met.

She didn't flirt for one thing. He had a vague feeling, which never got far enough to be coherent thought, that he must be very careful to meet her with an equal frankness always, and the prospect of such frankness appealed to him with all the zest of novelty. He had never tried to make a chum of a girl before.

"You must let me see your work," he said aloud. "I might be able to give you some pointers about dealers, you know, and places to exhibit. Anyhow I want to know the kind of thing you're interested in."

That was early in April and toward the middle of the month he received a letter from the aunt in Boston who had brought him up, asking him to call on some friends of hers who were in New York for spring shopping. They were a Mrs. and Miss Monroe, and they were staying at the Biltmore.

Dutifully he went to call in the course of the next week, was informed at the desk that the Monroes were out, and left his card with an inward sigh of relief. Aunt Clara's friends were not apt to be thrilling.

Two days later there was a note in his morning's mail from Mrs. Monroe, asking him to dine with them informally the following evening. Jimmie debated the matter doubtfully, and finally flipped a quarter—heads he'd go; tails he'd refuse.

Heads it was.

So it came about that he put on his evening clothes with the air of a decidedly abused martyr, and, arriving at the appointed hour at the Biltmore, was presented by his hostess to her daughter Constance.

Jimmie drew in his breath with startled suddenness. It was too bad of Aunt Clara not to have given him a hint. Here he'd wasted a whole week of their stay, and he hadn't an idea how much longer they were planning to remain in town.

He set himself to making the dinner a success, with even more than his customary efforts where a pretty girl was concerned. Afterward Constance and he danced, while Mrs. Monroe sat in lonely patience at their deserted table and yawned painfully behind her rather pudgy hand. She had had a tiring day, helping Constance acquire the white and silver confection, among other things, and even the rioting of the perspiring hotel orchestra failed to keep her from dozing off in little jerks from time to time.

Constance, coming back to the table

between dances and catching her in one of these surreptitious noddings, ordered her off to bed with much sternness. "But unless Mr. Talbot is tired," she added, flashing him a quick smile of eyes and lips. Jimmie hastened a fervent disclaimer. *Tired!* When the evening had only begun? And there was that new step he'd been telling her about.

Mrs. Monroe went to bed, gratefully obedient, like the well-brought-up parent she was, and Constance and Jimmie practiced the step, and invented another. Incidentally, they felt as if they had known each other a long time instead of merely a few hours, and that they were going to know each other better yet.

It was not the kind of feeling Jimmie had had about Zoë Westgate from their first meeting; Constance was not the type of girl who suggested a potential chum, but there was a certain heady excitement about it.

He learned that the Monroes would probably be in New York for a month longer, and that Constance knew no young people in the city, except himself. Wherefore his duty to Aunt Clara, in Boston, was obvious. For the next month he divided such hours as were not claimed by the architect's office where he was supposed to be learning his future profession, with an admirable impartiality, between Zoë Westgate and Constance.

If Zoë and he had tea at their special little candlelight table in the Village, then the following afternoon he took Constance to the Plaza and they tried out new dance steps with enthusiasm between mouthfuls of cooling tea and toasted English muffins. And the week he took Zoë three times in succession to see "Yellow Jacket," which she declared was the only play worth seeing in town, he squared the account with orchestra seats for Mrs. Monroe and Constance to hear Farrar in "Butter-

fly." Mrs. Monroe cried a little, sentimentally, at appropriate spots, but Constance sat through the entire performance with a wide-eyed, serious attention which was a good deal like a child's awed enjoyment of some glittering fairy spectacle. So far as Jimmie—who was more moved by the music than he was willing to show—could see, the pathos and tragedy of the story did not touch her at all.

When the final curtain went down she clapped vigorously with the rest of the house, and smoothed the tip of a honey-colored curl back into place, considering, her glance resting on her mother's reddened nose and eyelids with an amused air.

"Broke you all up, mumsie, didn't it?" she observed cheerfully. "Let's go somewhere for supper where it's *gay*. This has been perfectly heavenly, Jimmie, but I don't want to go to sleep on a tragedy. Find me something to take the taste away," she commanded.

Jimmie caught himself wondering for a moment whether she was really a little hard, or just very young. She must have read something of this in his expression, for she laughed, a wholly contagious and amused little chuckle.

"I suppose I ought to be mopping my eyes like mumsie," she said frankly. "But I never could take the opera seriously. They're all so fat and complacent and—settled. Now if one could just shut one's eyes and listen—Anyhow, I don't want to cry, Jimmie. We're only young such a little bit of a while, I want to laugh and enjoy it. Let's go and dance somewhere. No, mumsie, Mr. Talbot won't think I'm unappreciative and if he does, it doesn't matter. He'll get over it."

Her words came to Jimmie's ears with a curiously familiar sound. All at once he was back sitting across a tiny candlelight table from a girl who had expressed with startling earnestness a similar conviction.



"I want to *live* every minute," Zoë had said.

He had never troubled to put it in words, but it was very close to being his own creed of life, now that he heard it. Particularly Constance's version. He shied away instinctively from serious things, and he dimly guessed that perhaps Zoë's "sixty-seconds full" of living covered more than the right to laugh.

Then he lifted his shoulders in a shrug which dismissed the subject with a half-puzzled impatience.

"Right you are," he said "Want to try a new place? There's the Coq Vermillion. It's a bit noisy, but if your mother wouldn't mind——"

"Oh, mumie's a sport, even if she does like a good old-fashioned weep," Constance declared easily. "Come along."

In the end the Monroes remained in New York six weeks instead of four. Jimmie saw them on an average of once in twenty-four hours, and the number and intricacy of the new dance steps Constance and he acquired would have made no mean repertoire for the latest professional team. He saw Zoë Westgate less often, because she was busier than Constance. She had a number of small orders

for magazine illustrations and was hard at work in the studio she shared with another young artist. She took her work seriously and read Jimmie long lectures, which amused him mightily, on his attitude toward his own profession.

"I think to be an architect, a really big one, must give a man just about the highest sense of achievement he



As he held her cloak for her, Jimmie found his fingers closing hard on the slender shoulders.

could know," she said once. "Think of the men who built those glorious old cathedrals abroad. They've given something beautiful to the world that'll live, oh, almost forever! Something that's not just for the collectors and princes and millionaires to hold and hide away for themselves, but for every man, woman, and child who passes it in the street. Something to put beauty into the poorest, barest sort of lives." She broke off, flushing sensitively, and glanced at Jimmie.

There was a quick little gleam of enthusiasm in his gray eyes which seemed to have taken fire from her own.

"It's—it's wonderful," he said, dropping his voice to an intimate, caressing note, "to have some one who understands. Don't you—don't you feel that, too, Zoë?"

Her flush deepened.

"I reckon it's the most wonderful thing in the world," she said slowly, "and the rarest."

He never talked to Constance about being understood. For one thing, because if there was any understanding to be done, she insisted, quite reasonably, on his doing it himself. And for the rest, as far as she was concerned, there was no need.

She was an entirely open and matter-of-fact little person, in spite of her charm and the years of spoiling behind her. When she was happy she showed it, and when things went contrariwise she sulked frankly and childishly for an hour or so, and then promptly forgot it in the next interest which appeared. As for the future, she was too busy with the present to take it seriously.

"I never," she told Jimmie with a quaint assumption of sedateness, "allow myself to cross bridges till I come to them. It's so unnecessarily wearing on the bridges, poor things."

The evening before Mrs. Monroe and Constance returned to Boston, Jimmie dined with them. Not that this was an

unusual occurrence, but the realization that it was the last time served to cast a tiny and hitherto unknown constraint over the meal. There was another feature of the evening, too, which was different from former evenings they had spent together. Mrs. Monroe did not make her usual excuse of fatigue, or letters to write home, and leave Jimmie and Constance to dance, or otherwise plan the next few hours as they pleased.

To-night she sat placidly at the table, and held Jimmie in a reminiscent conversation about Aunt Clara and his boyhood days in Boston. Then she suggested that they all take their chances at theater tickets. If they started early, they'd get in somewhere.

"I don't feel like being left alone to-night," she said, smiling at Jimmie. He had grown to look for that particular friendly little smile Mrs. Monroe gave him. It had a homely, motherly quality which he had never known much about in the past. Aunt Clara had done her duty by him, as she saw it, but she was not, by nature, a motherly sort of person.

He was conscious of a swift little pang of remorse at the words. Constance and he had been selfish in their absorbed enjoyment of each other's society. It must have been beastly lonesome for a woman like Mrs. Monroe to stay, evening after evening, by herself in a cheerless hotel sitting room, in a strange city.

Constance was rather quiet on the way to the theater and through the performance. Usually she had a hundred gay little comments to whisper in criticism or praise, but to-night she sat with her eyes and apparently all her attention concentrated on the stage. Jimmie wondered with a quickening of his pulses whether she were sorry that it was the end. Afterward he suggested supper somewhere, and a dance, but Constance objected.

"I don't feel like dancing," she said listlessly. "Let's just go home. I'm—I'm awfully tired, Jimmie."

There was the faintest suspicion of a quiver in her voice, and her face, in the dim light of the theater, looked pale and a bit wistful, like that of a child who has been cheated unexpectedly of something it wanted. Mrs. Monroe, on the other side of Constance, was struggling with the intricacies of her evening wrap and for the time was oblivious to all about her, and the orchestra was playing, very softly and seductively to the departing audience.

As he held her cloak for her, Jimmie found his fingers closing hard on the slender shoulders just under his hands. He hadn't meant to do it, but Constance did not draw away; she merely glanced up at the daring young man and smiled, a smile oddly uncertain of itself, and rather tremulous, and altogether young and headily sweet.

"Are you going to miss me?" Jimmie murmured inanely.

That smile had somehow befuddled both his tongue and his usual caution. Constance nodded dumbly. She seemed to have lost all her power of light-hearted riposte. Something about her very immobility drew him on like a challenge. He bent lower, till his lips were almost touching one small pink-tipped ear, and his words came in a hot rush. He did not know what they would be before they were actually spoken.

"Shall I come to Boston for you, Constance?"

There was a pause, brief as a quickly drawn breath, and then one word, as oddly uncertain of itself as her smile had been.

"Yes."

Jimmie straightened himself mechanically, letting his hands slip from her shoulders, and turned to answer a question Mrs. Monroe had asked him, apparently for the second time. He had

a dazed sense of utter and extravagant unreality in the little scene he had just been through. It seemed more like a continuation of the play they had seen to-night, a fourth act on which the curtain had forgotten to rise.

A moment before he had thrilled to Constance's mood; now he was only conscious of an entire unbelief in this thing and its connection with himself, Jimmie Talbot. He was inclined to be angry with his sudden lack of all emotion.

He looked at Constance once or twice, inquiringly, but she refused to meet his eyes. Mrs. Monroe carried the conversation by sheer effort during the ride back to the hotel. She did not appear to notice or mind the lack of spontaneity in their occasional responses.

At the elevator he had a moment alone with Constance, while her mother went to the desk for their key.

"You meant it?" he asked gravely. It struck him incongruously, even while he said it, that his tone—that of a happy and accepted lover—should be a very different thing.

Constance still refused to look at him.

"I—yes; I meant it, of course, Jimmie," she said nervously. "But I'm—you mustn't ask me to marry you for a long time. I'm not through with having a good time yet. We—let's just call it being engaged to be engaged some day."

"But you talk as if you won't have any good times after we're married," Jimmie protested, rather feebly it must be admitted. His own thoughts, he realized guiltily, had not been so far away from the track hers had taken.

"Oh, well, you know how married people usually seem," Constance said apologetically. "But I'm awfully fond of you, Jimmie"—her eyes were shy again—"and I dare say one gets tired of gadding about after a while."

He had to be content with that, for



"Oh, Jimmie, nothing has ever counted but you! Nothing in all the world ever can."

Mrs. Monroe returned then with the key, and he said a quite formal good night to them both, promising to be at the train on the morrow to see them off. From that point his recollections of the evening were a kaleidoscopic jumble of emotions and swiftly moving events.

He had left the hotel with a vague

determination to wait until his brain was clear and his thoughts more under control. Once he had an impulse to call on Zoë at the studio, late as the hour was, and tell her his news. Zoë wasn't conventional. She'd get up and dress if he telephoned and said he must see her.

He couldn't reason why he wanted

Zoë to know. Unless—but of course that was nonsense—he wanted to hear her say his engagement and marriage could make no difference in a friendship like theirs. Why should it? Wasn't he entirely willing to let Constance keep her former friends about her? But, in spite of himself, he knew instinctively that Zoë would not say it. After all, she had been brought up in South Carolina, and early traditions have a tenacious grip. He did not believe such a friendship would be smiled on in a place like Charleston.

He decided abruptly that he would not tell Zoë yet. On second thought, he hadn't the right to mention it until Constance was willing. No, he wouldn't go to see Zoë to-night, but as long as he was headed in that direction, he might as well keep on through her street. It was while he was hesitating that the mud on the curb oozed treacherously under his heel, and the car with the brilliant headlights came around the corner.

Afterward there seemed to be a long interval of jagged red flame streaks splitting up the darkness of the street, and then a queer unsteadiness of brain and feet, in which he felt his way, groping like a blind man, along the area rails of the houses at the side of the walk, repeating over and over Zoë's number, lest that, too, leave him, with all the other happenings of his past life, before he got to its safety and shelter.

Somehow he reached it at last, and found the bell over her letter box in the vestibule. After that there was only a confused memory of hundreds of painful steps to be toiled up, clinging to a shaky banister rail, and then an open, lighted doorway and Zoë's face and her frightened, pitiful cry at sight of him:

"Jimmie—Jimmie—*dear!*"

She was the only real dependable thing in the world, as he felt her warm, firm young hands steadying him into

the room behind her. He gave up trying to slow down that whirling treadmill in his brain.

Zoë was there. What did the rest of it matter? He sat down submissively in a big chair. Later, still dazed, but quite at peace with himself and the world, he let her bathe his cut head, bandage it deftly, and snap those three foolish little safety pins into place.

The girl who shared the tiny studio apartment with Zoë did not appear, so he decided drowsily that she was either away or asleep. In any case, it didn't matter.

"Nothing," he said aloud, in a tone of slow, almost meditative satisfaction, "matters except you, Zoë."

He thought he heard her catch her breath sharply, but her fingers went on in their steady handling of pins and bandage.

But the thing he had just said was so absolutely right and impervious to possible argument that Jimmie repeated it. If she didn't understand, he must make her. Nothing did or could matter except Zoë. Why, he'd always known, somehow, in some intimate, rarely explored corner of his soul.

"Nothing in the world counts but you, Zoë."

And then there had been the swift touch of her arms about his neck, the silken softness and perfume of her tumbled hair against his cheek, and her voice:

"Oh, Jimmie, nothing has ever counted but you! Nothing in all the world ever can."

Later, he thought she had somehow found a taxi and had taken him home herself, but it was all part of that whirling treadmill. He had waked to the same treadmill which, gradually, under strenuous effort, gave off tiny, unrelated sparks of recollection. And in this fashion, piecing these unrelated bits patiently together, like the scraps in a crazy quilt, he had gradually arrived

at a remembrance of the events of last evening as they affected himself, and Zoë Westgate, and Constance.

Every way he turned there was no way out except the truth. To offer them anything else or less would be merely another insult. And, of course, if they really did care for him, the truth would cure them speedily. No girl could go on caring after she knew. He owed them that much at the very least.

He got out of bed, still not very steady on his feet, and dressed. He would write. He could make it clearer that way, and he wouldn't have to watch their faces as they read. He said "they," but it was Zoë's face he was visioning. How she had looked in the lighted doorway last night, and cried out at seeing him, and how she would look to-day, when she knew.

He put the thought from him with a little shiver of pain, and gripped his courage for the task in hand.

The letters did not take as long to write as might have been supposed. He made no excuses, and gave the bald facts baldly, taking a morbid sort of satisfaction in blackening himself as thoroughly as either of them might feel inclined to do.

He had no hope that they would understand—how could they? He didn't himself. If he had even the faintest little germ of hope he could not have written those letters in an entire day, perhaps not at all.

He addressed and stamped the envelopes, and set them on the mantel-piece side by side. He had to throttle an almost uncontrollable impulse to drop them into the blazing fire so conveniently near.

"I'll take them out and mail them when I've got a grip on this giddiness," he muttered, and stared at them with dull eyes. He had a queer fancy that they were leering back at him triumphantly.

His mind ran on, touching and rejecting all sorts of absurd and irrelevant bits of memory.

Years ago Aunt Clara had taken him to Florida with her and he had been fascinated by a funny little lizardlike thing in the garden that some one had told him was a chameleon. The way the flames in the fireplace licked up, as if trying to get at those two squares of white paper above them, and changed to a dozen fleeting colors in doing so reminded him of the way that Florida chameleon had changed his coat. He smiled rather bitterly.

"I'm a good deal like the little beast myself," he ejaculated. "I'm nothing but a human chameleon. All my life I've changed color to fit every situation I found myself in. I never guessed it before, but I've done exactly what I thought people expected of me. Always wanted to fit, to be the proper color, just as the chameleon wanted it, too. I play up to a situation, to the lights and music. I did it with Constance last night. I wasn't feeling a real honest emotion; nothing but the actor's instinct to please his audience."

He scowled at the fire, slouched down in the chair in a discouraged fashion. He heard steps coming up the stairs, and some one knocked on his door. He straightened up abruptly, the color surging to his face, and then receding as quickly as it had come. He had a horrible fear that it might be Zoë. But, to his intense surprise, his visitor was Mrs. Monroe. She came into the room, smiling, but her expression altered at sight of his bandages.

"Why—Jimmie," she faltered. She had always been slightly maternal in her manner toward him, but she had never called him Jimmie before. He wondered whether Constance had told her, and whether the new informality meant approval. It could hardly be less difficult to explain to Constance's mother than to Constance herself.



While these thoughts were racing through his brain, he was engaged with at least an outward appearance of calm, in relating such details of the accident as he remembered himself. Zoë passed in the recital as "a friend whose rooms were fortunately near."

Mrs. Monroe exclaimed and commiserated at length and then, the subject being thoroughly exhausted, a rather awkward silence fell.

Constance's mother broke it by leaning forward and laying her gloved fingers on Jimmie's arm.

"Jimmie," she said anxiously, "Connie told me last night, and—you're going to hate me just at first, my dear boy."

He stared at her with puzzled eyes, and the fingers on his arm patted him gently.

"But you mustn't, Jimmie. I'm thinking of you quite as much as of my girl. You—you mustn't hold her tied to an impulsive promise. You see, I'm her mother, and I've studied Connie for nineteen years. I know her every changing little mood. That's what last night was, Jimmie, a pretty little rose-colored mood, that was part of the play, and—and it's being the last time with you."

The faded blue eyes which had probably been very like Constance's once, implored him to hear her out.

"I—I hate to tell you this, Jimmie, but it's not the first time. She's been spoiled with attention; boys and men have run after her since she was sixteen. Each affair is awfully serious while it lasts, which isn't usually long. If I didn't like you so much myself, I'd let it go on to the inevitable end. But you're too nice a boy to be played with—hurt. I told Connie I was going to put a stop to this unless she really cared enough this time to marry you at once, before we went back to Boston."

Jimmie drew a deep breath to steady

the pounding of his heart up somewhere in his throat.

"And she—Constance said——" he stammered.

Mrs. Monroe patted his arm more slowly.

"I'm sorry, my boy. She doesn't want to marry any one yet."

"I know," Jimmie said. "She told me as much, anyhow."

Then he flung his shoulders back and set his jaw squarely.

"Before you judge Constance," he said thickly, "listen to me. It's not an easy thing to tell, but I guess I owe it to you."

After the first few stumbling words, there was even a kind of relief in the fact of confession.

Mrs. Monroe heard him to the end silently, but she did not withdraw her hand from its place on his arm.

"So you see, I was doubly right," she said with a little smile, as her only comment.

Her smile "broke him all up," as he would have expressed it.

"You're an angel, Mrs. Monroe, to take it that way," he said unsteadily. "Any mother would be justified in feeling nothing but contempt, and showing it. But at least I was going to tell them both the truth this morning." He pointed to the envelopes on the mantelpiece.

She surprised him by saying quickly and decidedly:

"No, Jimmie, never that."

He frowned uncertainly.

"But—but, Mrs. Monroe——"

"No," she reiterated still more positively. "There is no need with Constance; she knows I was going to tell you the thing was over on her part. Let her keep a pretty little memory of you, and the New York visit. She's so young—well, I hate to see a young thing grow bitter. And she is fond of you, my boy. Only that's not quite enough

for the big thing. And for this other girl"—she looked at him, her smile touching lips and eyes this time—"you must never tell her at all, Jimmie. You love her."

He colored.

"I realize now that I do," he said humbly. "But that's all the more reason, I should think, why——"

A shake of the head answered him.

"My dear, she'd probably forgive you and marry you in the end," she told him, "but, as I said a moment before, I hate to see a young girl have her illusions knocked head over heels. It's so hard to forget, even when it's been forgiven over and over. And from what you tell me of this Zoë of yours, she's the kind that wouldn't find forgetting easy."

She got to her feet and held out her hand.

"Take my advice," she said and, turning to open the door, confronted Zoë herself on the threshold. There was a little awkward pause while the two eyed each other appraisingly, and then the older woman smiled.

"Isn't this Miss Westgate?" she asked. "I am a very old friend of Jimmie's aunt, and a very sincere, though not so old, friend of Jimmie's. I hope you won't mind his having told me about you two. I'm so glad to have had this chance of meeting you and wishing you both every happiness. I have even been giving Jimmie some good advice on the subject. Old ladies have privileges, you know."

Zoë's smile and blush were a charming thing to see. She had bloomed overnight in some sudden, inexplicable

fashion which touched her thin eager face to a wistful, hitherto unguessed-at loveliness.

"Jimmie must follow your advice, whatever it was," she declared gravely. "I am sure it was good."

Mrs. Monroe acted on an impulse; she declared once that all her best decisions were made in that fashion, and she had never regretted one yet. Behind Zoë's back she reached unobtrusively for the envelopes on the mantelpiece and, with a gesture toward Jimmie, dropped them lightly into the fire beneath. Then she put her finger against her lip, nodded in Zoë's direction, and slipped quietly out the door, shutting it behind her.

Zoë and Jimmie were looking at each other. They were never, afterward, quite sure at what moment their visitor left them. There are some advantages in being a chameleon. You react quickly. It's all a matter of your environment and associates. Jimmie's color, just now, was the color of the firelight, which stood for peace and security and warm, lovely things, like Zoë, and Zoë's faith in himself.

"Zoë," he asked a little fearfully, "without knowing what it was, do you really tell me to take her advice?"

The girl laughed.

"Without knowing, it's a bit hard to say, Jimmie, but somehow I liked her awfully. Yes, on the whole, I'm willing to trust her judgment."

"Thank God," whispered Jimmie Talbot under his breath, but aloud he only said, in a wholly different tone, "You darling!"

He was still the chameleon.

**Another delightful love story by Marguerite Aspinwall will appear in SMITH'S for September. It bears the fascinating title of "The Road to Spain."**



# Conn of the Coral Seas

By Beatrice Grimshaw

Author of "Vaiti of the Islands," "Isles of Love," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

## CHARACTERS IN THE STORY:

DEIRDRE ROSE, a romantic young girl from the north of Ireland, who seeks social freedom through the medium of a marriage to a fellow student in the university at Dublin.

ROGERS, her legal husband, disciple of Sonya Kovalevksy, who gives Deirdre her freedom immediately following the ceremony, and is not heard from thereafter.

ADRIAN SHAW, a London barrister who falls in love with Deirdre, rather unemotionally, when they meet in the Canary Islands, and with whom she for a time fancies herself in love. He discovers for her that her husband is still living, but that he became insane the week after the ceremony, and that she is still bound to him. So Adrian passes on, and Deirdre continues her wandering.

FURSEY, head of a disreputable gang of pearlers, living on one of the New Cumberland Islands in the Western Pacific. He is noted for his violence and dissipated life.

STEPHEN CONN, resident and owner of the island of Wawa, upon which Deirdre is landed by mistake the night of her arrival in the New Cumberlands.

GATEHOUSE, secretary to the British Commissioner in the New Cumberlands, who is sent over to Conn's island to investigate Deirdre's stop there.

WHAT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED: Since her student marriage Deirdre has become a wanderer, and a composer of popular songs which are sung the whole world over. She is in one of the South Sea Islands when she overhears a traveler telling of the New Cumberland group and their remote location. She determines to visit them, and procures a letter of introduction to the missionaries on the Mission Island, knowing that they will take her in for her stay. By mistake, she is put ashore on another island, late at night, which she believes to be the pearlers' island, as she finds men feasting and drinking freely in the house. She hides until all but the owner of the island is gone. She believes him to be Fursey until he discovers her at the piano playing one of her own songs, "Your Shadow on My Heart," and she talks with him. He is Stephen Conn, who entertains her charmingly and provides her with a boat in which she again sets out for the Mission Island. The reverend Mrs. Saul, the missionary's wife, is so uncompromising in her attitude regarding Deirdre's stop at Conn's island that Deirdre determines to leave the Mission Island at once and stop with the trader's wife on the main island. En route, however, she stops for another visit with Conn. Reaching his house, she surprises thieves, whom she believes to be natives, pillaging his house. They discover her before she has a chance to escape, and they prove to be Fursey and his gang of pearlers, searching Conn's house for the secret means he has of making a fortune. Deirdre is forced to sing for the drunken Fursey for hours before she escapes to her canoe and reaches the trader's island. There she is put ashore at dusk, and loses herself in the native head-hunter's dancing ground. Wandering about among the images of native gods, embodied in bats, birds, and fiends, she suddenly comes upon Conn, supposed to be away on a two-day expedition to a remote island.

## CHAPTER VIII.

YOUR secret?" asked Deirdre, the eternal woman kindling in her at the thought of a mystery.

"The secret?"

"The secret," answered Conn.

"But you never told any one you never trusted."

"I must trust you now; and besides, I would, anyhow. Don't stop to talk; it's unsafe. Follow me exactly, and

take care of the big shell heaps. They might make the deuce of a noise."

She had not noticed them before, but she saw them now in the light of the fully risen moon, bulking behind one row of the shrined devils, mounds and mounds of oyster shells, new, toward the edges of the dancing ground, and loosely piled; old, covered with bush and creepers, as they receded farther and farther into the forest. The size

The story began in the June number.

and number of them amazed her; it seemed as if the people of Meliasi must, for centuries, have gathered there to eat their oysters and to pile the shells.

"Like the middens they make such a fuss about among archaeologists at home," said Conn, who seemed to know what she was thinking.

He led her a curious dance, in and out among the shell heaps, until they were well away from the vivid rays of moonlight now pouring down into the dancing ground. It grew dark and darker. An invisible night bird, astonishingly close, called "Cork!" and went off with an explosive noise of wings. Something hissed like a steam pipe.

Deirdre drew closer to Conn; he took her hand, pressed it, and drew her on faster, but said nothing. She could not see him now; he led her, in the intense darkness of the forest, swinging her to right and left, half lifting her now and then, over some tangle of knitted lianas, or helping her, with strong hand about her waist, to stride some giant log which barred the way. There was no path; she could feel that, with her lightly shod feet, and she wondered at his sense of direction. He never faltered for an instant, but led her, quickly and surely, for some five minutes, and then, with a whispered word, brought her to a halt. He held her hand; she felt him sinking down through the earth.

"Keep still," he whispered, with his head at her knee. In a moment he had loosed her hand and was gone. She heard him faintly, underneath; he seemed to be moving stones. "That's right now," came a soft whisper from the ground. "Take one step forward, and let yourself go."

She did with utter faith. If Conn had told her, she would have taken one step forward and let herself go over Niagara, with faith exactly the same. For all that she did not know it, would

not know it yet a while, that was, indeed, what she had already done.

There was an instant of sickening, unsupported drop, and then Conn's arms, catching her knees, springing upward to her waist, and letting her down, with the ease of perfect strength, upon an invisible floor. She could not see him; she could feel him very near. The breast of his silk shirt brushed against her face. She felt that they had left the world; that it was as though they had died, and were alone together in ultimate space. She read his mind as if he had spoken; she knew that he read hers, and that the thought between them was the same. "Lord, my Lord!" were the words which welled up, unspoken, in her heart.

Conn was the first to move. She knew that he drew away from her because they were alone in this forest, because she was solitary, unprotected, in Meliasi. Nine and ninety men in a hundred, she felt, would have acted otherwise. Not her man. He rang pure gold.

"Come on," was all that he said, tongue-tied like most strong men when there was much that cried for speech. But the brush of his long fingers as he drew them from her arm was a speech in itself. And Deirdre, wild, sad little gypsy, "ever roaming with a hungry heart," remembered those who had snatched fiercely at her love; who had offered her false loves, false troth; who had longed, and left, and forgotten, in all the history of her many wanderings; and, forgetting for the time, as if it had never been, the strangling noose that she had tied about her neck, she cried, silently, exultingly:

"Here by God's grace is the one man for me."

She followed through the dark.

In a minute, stooping and winding about, they came into a larger space, perceptible by the sudden freshness of the air. Conn stopped here, and struck

a light. A hurricane lamp was standing on a ledge; he lit it, and held it up.

"You can speak now," he said. "If one regiment of soldiers was murdering another down here, no one above ground would hear."

But Deirdre had no desire to speak. She was conscious of a strange over-running calm, as if she had come, at last, to the end of a long, long road. She looked about her with interest which was incurious, quiet. They were standing in a good-sized cave, the corridor by which they had come showing behind them as a dark, narrow archway. The cave was in no way remarkable. It had walls of coral limestone, full of small pits and basins; the floor was stone and sand. The freshness of the air showed that it had communication with outdoors, but no openings could be seen.

Stacked in a corner were some tins and plates and a biscuit box, also a spirit lamp. Conn set about the business of making tea, opening tins, laying out biscuits and sheep's tongue on enameled iron plates, as if he and Deirdre had come down through the forest and into the cave for no other reason than a picnic.

"You want tea," he stated, when it was ready, and set it before her. They shared their meal, with hardly a word. The same curious calm lay upon the girl; she felt that nothing mattered, nothing in all the world, since the moment when she had read this man's heart. As for Conn, with his fair, dry hair oddly ruffled, and his bright gray eyes now fixing hers, now avoiding them, he was like one who has found a treasure which he has not yet had time to examine, who delights, and yet is puzzled.

With an effort plain to see, he broke into common talk again.

"You haven't told me yet," he said, "how you came to be wandering about Meliasi bush in the dark." He was not

very much surprised, it seemed. So many odd things happened in the New Cumberlands.

Deirdre told her tale. She was almost alarmed at the effect of that part of it which referred to Fursey. Conn's face, in the light of the lamp, turned slowly, as she spoke, to a dark, dangerous red, and then to pale again. She saw that his hand was clenched upon his knee, until the knuckles stood out like marbles.

"I'll attend to Fursey," was all that he said. Then he told her that he could take her, by and by, to the trader's house. It was not far away; they could easily get there by nine o'clock. He thought she would be comfortable.

"And then, of course," he stated, "it will be easy for me to come and see you."

Deirdre, under the influence of the sweet drug she had swallowed, somehow, somewhere, in the course of the last half hour, had nothing to say. If he would come, he would.

For a moment they sat silent on the floor of the cave, looking at one another in the diffused thin light of the hurricane lamp. The same idea occurred to both of them. They were like. Not with any actual likeness of feature or expression, but with the unclassable resemblance known to families as "general family likeness." Deirdre was almost small for a woman, Conn was big for a man; but they were like. They sat in the same manner, easily cross-legged, leaning a little forward as people lean who have traveled much on small, inconvenient boats, and learned to do without back support. Conn had produced cigarettes; they were smoking them in the same way, with the same thought-absent movement of the hand now and then and the same slow, easy puff. And Deirdre's small, long hand, with the roundish finger ends and nails delicate yet strong, was of the same family as Conn's. And her foot



For a moment they sat silent on the floor of the cave, looking at one another. The same idea occurred to both of them.

was like in shape. And the shape of her thoughts was like. She knew that so well that she asked him, presently, savoring her cigarette:

"Do you think we are related, by any chance?"

Conn considered the matter. She had already found that one of his good points lay in the fact that he never said, "Why?"

"I know," he produced. "I've noticed it, too. I think our minds are; and mind shapes body, a good bit."

Then she asked him, a little fearfully, if he had had her odd experience of the hypnotic power of foolish little words and ordinary lines of poetry. She even told him about "Smith's Grammar" and examples, and the names of the mountain ranges of Ireland.

"They seemed to swim in gold," she

said. "The gold of summer's days, some days, the best. And you heard the sea in them. And it was awfully silly, all that, but it took one's life in its hands and made one whatever it wished."

She told him that she felt her heart come up into her throat when she thought of

There gloom the dark broad seas, my mariners!

Amazed, she heard herself telling him all the things she had never thought any one could understand. And he understood. But he put a strong masculine note into her music.

"You can't let these things run away with you," he said, laying down his cigarette beside him, so that it smoldered and went out—one of her tricks when talking earnestly; she noted it. "Dreams are dangerous in the islands.



Best thing is not to think of them as dreams; take them as facts. Not to make oneself egotistic. Girls are darling things, but they do take all their own feelings as special to themselves. Wake up, Deirdre." He gave her arm a little shake. "You're one of a class, and those are our shibboleths. I've got mine."

"What are they?" she asked breathlessly. She liked the phrase "our" shibboleths.

"Oh, trifling things." He colored a little. "One is a bit of a poem I read once in a paper, no author, not even sure of the words. I'll tell you—well, it was when I was very young, and they wanted me to be a stockbroker. They put me in the office of some abominable old friend of my people's and all that, and I was going over on the Holyhead boat one winter morning; frost and a green sea, and gulls dipping, you know, and the cold smell of the land coming up; and the dashed thing came into my head, don't know where I had read it.

"The stars are with the voyager  
Wherever he may sail,  
The sun is constant to his time,  
The moon will never fail,  
But follow, follow, round the earth,  
The green earth and the sea.

"Couldn't remember the last lines, but the others got me—just as you say, same way silly little things get hundreds of us, and the gulls and the green sea, not even green earth like the poem, but it fitted all the same—well, they were like a match thrown into something that had been piling up and up for ever so long, and it all went—whiff! So when I landed, I went to a hotel, and next morning I just crossed back to Dublin. And I told my father I wasn't going to be a stockbroker, and asked him for fifty pounds. So he said the things they say."

"Yes?"

"And it was fourteen, steerage, out to

Auckland from London. And I'm twenty-eight now; never repented one second of the time, and, anyhow, did better than my brothers who stayed."

He was lame of speech when it came to telling of his successes; she liked that.

"You are rich, they all say," she finished for him.

"Anyhow," he ended. "I would have done it and kept to it—poor."

"Why?" asked the girl. "Why do we?"

"Because we're the stones of empire, little girl, and things are built with us. That's why."

"It builds?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"God knows. It's not God, and not the devil. But it's pretty near as strong."

"I am frightened of it," said Deirdre after a pause.

"You may be. It does cruel things to all of us. I dare say you know. If you don't, you will."

She thought she did know. She feared, perhaps, she might.

"We're the same," she brought out presently.

"We go down the one road." The words were burdened heavily with meaning. More and more the sweet drug, the drug that made her forget that cruel coil about her neck, was invading all her being.

"One road," she heard herself repeat. Then she put her hand on the floor and rose. "I must," she thought.

"What about your secret?" she asked him.

The commonplace query broke into the rare moment as daylight through stained glass shattered by a stone.

She saw him look at her through narrowed eyes, as one who senses a mystery, and then, putting it for the moment aside, he answered her.

"You're to know all that. Look

round you. Where do you think this cave is?"

"I couldn't possibly guess."

"Under the biggest and oldest of the shell heaps. Where do you think it leads to?"

"Well, it would lead to the sea, wouldn't it?"

"Right. We're going to follow it."

He took up the hurricane lamp, and led the way. Deirdre was mystified. It seemed the commonest and most uninteresting of coral limestone caves, white-walled, seamed with cracks, and pockmarked with small hollows. It was tunnel-shaped, and sloped a little as they went on.

"This must lead out under the sea," she said, remembering that she had climbed no hill since leaving the beach.

"It does, by and by. If it didn't, there'd be no secret." He had come to a pause and was standing still on the sandy floor of the cave, looking at her with a certain touch of mischief. "Don't you want to know all about it?" he asked. The lamp flame wavered a little in a breath of the damp, salty wind which was creeping up from some unknown opening seaward. Conn's sharp-cut features in the dancing light took on an odd appearance of grimace.

"Tell me right from the beginning," was her answer. Curiosity had waked again; she was burning to know. All those "Conn hunts" she had heard of; all the strategies and trap-layings of Meliasi, wild with cupidity; the bribing and bullying of natives; the "getting at" mail bags; the raid she herself had seen in Wawa Island—all these forces set against Conn's solitary hand and head, and defeated by them, time after time, and she, now, to be given what the whole of the New Cumberlands could not wrest. She had been more than woman if she had not felt the flattery of it.

"The beginning," said Conn—he swung his lantern lightly as he talked,

and turned up coral twigs in the sand with the toe of one canvas-clad long foot—"the beginning is that the Meliasi natives always lived on oysters till some of us came along. Oysters and other things. Long pig sometimes. But oysters, anyhow; they were easy to get. *Lapi-lapi*, you know, grows in shallow water, sometimes in your depth, sometimes a fathom or two down. Well, *lapi-lapi* has pearls in it, some of them pretty good. White men didn't come here till thirty or forty years ago. Natives all the time eating *lapi-lapi*, opening the shells and guzzling the oysters, and when they came to a nasty hard thing in one of 'em, spitting it out on the ground. Went on for centuries about this village here; natives don't change their ways. When we were cutting Charles the Second's head off, they were roasting their enemies on sticks here and drinking coconuts and guzzling *lapi-lapi* oysters, just the same as to-day. And piling up heaps and heaps of shells, round about the place where they had their ceremonial feasts. Not in the dancing grounds, you know, alongside of it. Begin to see?"

"Not quite," said Deirdre, with puzzled brow. "Because pearls are so easily spoiled they must have been destroyed, a dreadful pity, I suppose, but—"

"Just so. They were. When the pearlers first came here, they went all through the shell mounds. And they found heaps and baskets of pearls, some huge, that the natives had spit out. And, of course, when the natives found that the white men were looking, they went through the bush, and got heaps more. Every one of them was spoiled. So the pearlers cursed everything blue, and went away to fish in the harbor, where, of course, the beds have been a bit overfished, but they get a good few all the same. That's the story of the shell heaps. What do you think of it?"

"Isn't there more?"

"There is." Conn set down the lamp, and paused to light another cigarette. Deirdre felt, with the curious clairvoyance which seemed to attend her in this man's presence, that he was clinging to the last rags of his long-cherished secret; that regret, at the necessity of parting with it, mingled with the pleasure he felt in showing her his trust. It was a minute or so before he went on, but the cigarette was lighted and going at last, and he had no more excuse.

"Well," he said, speaking with his cigarette in the corner of his mouth—a masculine trick that she had always liked because "it makes their voices sound so casual and—and fascinating"—"well, that was all there was for some time. I was coffee planting, not making a bad thing of it, but it would have been slow. And one day I was out in the bush here just by chance; no one ever comes that way—if white people want to go to see the dancing ground, the track's the shortest, and the natives use it, too, as far as the dancing ground, and then they strike right off into the inland forests. But I'd followed up the shell heaps from a sort of archaeological interest. They led right back toward the beach, and when I came to the last, I saw a butterfly on one—my word, it was a butterfly! The rarest we have, as big as a small pigeon, with gold wings, and scarlet spots in the middle, set round in black velvet; I can see it this minute, the way it perched on the top of the shell heap, opening and shutting its wings in the sun to dry them, because we'd been having rain. And when it saw me, it flew off—strong as a bird those big ones are. And I whipped off my hat and went hell-for-leather after it. I've never seen one since, by the way."

"Did you get it?"

"What, the butterfly? No. I got a fortune instead. I came a frightful cropper, not looking where I was go-

ing, and was knocked half silly. Hit my head on a stone. And when I came round, one leg from the knee down was feeling so queer that I was quite sure it was broken. I couldn't see it, it was in a tangle of creepers, so I tried to get up and stand on it, and down I went again. 'Lord, I'm done for this time,' I thought, for I knew if the niggers found me, they would roast me on a—well, never mind that." For Deirdre was looking at him with wide, horrified eyes. "Where was I? Oh, I tried to stand up, and fell down. And at first I thought I was crippled, but when my head began to get over the knock it had had, I suddenly realized I wasn't, and that it was just a hole my leg had gone into. So I pulled it out, and stood up as good as new. And then I'd a look at the hole. It was just a sort of crack, with a big stone lying almost over it. I pulled off the stone. That was the way you came in with me a while ago. I keep the stone on it and the creepers trained over; the devil and all his angels couldn't find it, if I didn't choose. Well, I got in and had a look about. You remember, I said it had been raining. It had, and there'd been stormy weather outside. I went down all the way to the sea, and I saw something. It's been raining and stormy weather lately, hasn't it?"

"Yes." She remembered one day of furious wet and wind spent at the Mission House.

"Come on, and I'll show you what I saw, or some of it. You must understand it was a lot more remarkable the first time. I'll hold the light; you come after."

They went on down the cave. The easy slope continued. Not very far away, now, one could hear a dull, deadened murmur of great waters. The salt-smelling airs grew stronger, drew more steadily from the unseen sea.

"Tide's up," said Conn. "We're coming to it." At the end of the long,

white tunnel, in the light of the lamp, one could see a tossing glitter.

"Why, it's full; there isn't an outlet," said the girl.

"There isn't, even when tide's out. If there had been—but luckily there wasn't. Now wait a minute."

He had set down the lamp, and was fumbling in the recesses of a rocky shelf. She heard him strike a match. Instantly the cave was flooded by a fierce acetylene flare. Everything stood out as it does in time-exposed photographs. The pupils and irises of Conn's eyes showed as if marked round with a pen. The buttons on his silk shirt displayed each four clear, small needle holes, filled with neat stitching. On the sand, wind marks and the snakelike pencilings of hermit crabs were set in clear relief. You could have seen a pin, a grain of sugar.

Conn pointed silently down; here, there, to right, to left. And everywhere he pointed Deirdre saw pearls. Loose pearls. Beautiful pearls, shining in the acetylene flare as they had never shone before, but as they were now to shine in the years to come beneath electric lights in far northern lands. They would lie, there, upon the breasts of lovely women; would hang in their ears, and glow like little moons and stars on their white fingers. They would be the cause of intrigues, the rewards of base passions, the gifts of truest love. They would clasp the necks of innocent débutantes, and dangle in rich coils down the waists of painted women. Lands and houses were locked up in those moony little spheres; great motor cars, trained, bowing ranks of servants. The keys of the world lay in them. Who held as much of the greater pearls as his two hands could clasp might fly on the wings of the wind to every country on earth that has called the hearts of men. Italy, Greece, India, Japan, Paris, and Rome, Madrid, Vienna, New York, the

Taj Mahal, the Pyramids, California, the Rio Grande, the silent reaches of the Amazon, the thunders of the Horn—all, all, were clasped in the tiny rounds of the shining trivial things which lay scattered like drops of hail on the cave floor.

Deirdre was imaginative; she had the artist's soul. She took it in with one glance, and the wonder made her feel faint.

It was as if she had been shown in a single instant "the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them."

"Why," she said at last, "you must be far, far richer than anybody thought. You must be a millionaire!" And she felt a little, selfish pang of regret. No woman who loves desires her man to be too rich. She senses rivalry in the tremendous power of gold.

Conn did not answer. Bent over the sandy floor, he was busying himself as, perhaps, no man save he had ever been busied since the beginning of the world. With both hands he was scooping up pearls from the ground, gathering them in as one gathers berries fallen from a tree. Many of them were small, some very small; many were yellowed and off-color, others irregular in shape. But every here and there, among the wind ripples of the sand, lay a pearl as big and as round as a pea; once in a way he would find a pear-shaped gem; and just once, over a hollow made by a little drip from the roof of the cave, he found, nested in it like the egg of some fairy bird, a pearl of oval shape, clear, shining, and an inch at least in length. He held it up silently. It was Deirdre who screamed.

"Yours," he said, and put it in her hand.

"Oh, I couldn't!" she cried. "It's worth a fortune!" It seemed marvelous to her, feeling the small, cold thing in her fingers, that this accidental bit of an oyster should have power to make secure, until old age and death, the life



"Yours," he said, and put it in her hand.

"Oh, I couldn't!" she cried.

"It's worth a fortune!"

of any one who owned it. All necessity of labor, of anxiety, of planning for holidays, or "managing" without things one wanted, all fear of anything in the long list of human woes that money could prevent or cure, would be wiped out forever, if she but kept hold of this little, cold, smooth object in her hand. What fairy tale was stranger?

But one could not do such things, even when one had only three hundred a year, and was anxious about interest and investments. She knew that women, good women, some of them, did take presents of jewels and jewelry from men. She knew that many of

her acquaintances would have thought a year's scheming and planning none too long, if they could at the end of it have extorted in any possible manner just such an offer as she had listened to. She knew Conn meant it, and that there was no string tied to the offer, no recompense understood.

Yet the instinct of the thoroughly decent woman runs strongly, even violently, against the taking of valuables from men. There is, in her mind, but one thing possible to give in exchange. She did not reason about that; she did not know why the pull of the slipknot round her neck became sud-

denly perceptible once more, this time with the cruelest tug it ever had given her. She only turned a little white, and held out the pearl in her curved palm, guarding it as she held it—one must be careful with a thing of such great price.

"Please do take it," she said.

Conn, straightening up, with his fists full of pearls, looked at her, and saw she meant it. For some reason undefined, he grew as pale as she. But he spoke in a commonplace tone.

"Why, of course, if you would rather not. Hold on a minute till I put these away."

He worked a small leather bag out of a pocket, with one unoccupied finger, and began spilling the pearls into it.

They went in with a delicious cold, rattling sound. Deirdre found herself completely human and covetous as she listened to that pattering of magic rain. She would have liked, dearly, to own the power, the ease, it represented. And yet she was disappointed that Conn was rich!

When the bag was almost filled, and his hands were emptied, Conn took the big pearl from her. He had not asked her to accept it a second time. She felt the wrench at her heart that any woman would have felt as she watched the wondrous thing disappear. Conn tied up the bag, and placed it in a recess of the cave wall.

"I don't take them home when I'm going by the ordinary track route," he explained. "Not safe. Some of Furse's lot might surround me and go through me. I dive out through the water at the end and swim to an open place where I leave my boat. The boys think I'm out for a swim."

He was scanning the cave floor as he spoke, searching with stooped head for any stray gem which might have escaped his harvesting. "A fair crop this time," he said, straightening up.

"Crop? Do you get them every time?"

"I wouldn't if I didn't choose the right time, of course. After high winds and rain. It's a chance in a million, one way you look at it, that the things should have escaped in that particular fashion. And yet not so wonderful after all. Perhaps it's happened in other places, only nobody knows. You see, pearls are delicate things, and all the nigs let fall on the ground got weathered and spoiled, all that stopped there, that is.

"But just about the neighborhood of the shell heaps there are any number of little cracks; sort of thing you do find on soil that's made up of decayed coral, you know. And lots of the pearls went down the cracks. Now, that wouldn't have helped them much, if they'd only landed in the dirt and mess of a common cave floor. But they didn't. Heaps of 'em stopped in the cracks. Well, in stormy, windy weather, the spray beat into those cracks—not at any other time—and the pearls got a bath of sea water often enough to keep them all right. Then when it rained, the cracks were flooded from above, and they got swept down, every time, into this cave, which is clean and salty, not like the other ones, and there they stopped."

"How was it they didn't get washed out to the end where the water is, or carried away by spray in high tides?"

"The rain sank through the sand mostly, and where it didn't it trickled down to that little breakwater of rock you see, and dammed up and ran over. But the pearls stopped. Like the rifles in a sluice box. Fact is, the whole cave is a sort of sluice box, only it sluices pearls instead of gold. Everywhere there is a kink in the sand, or a little bar of rock, the pearls collect. You should have seen it the first time. Now I only get what has come down since the last visit I've made, and that's



getting less and less every time; some day it'll peter out altogether. But the day I found it I didn't expect anything more than just a cave like any other, and when I came along here, and held up my lamp—well, it didn't match my acetylene flare, but it showed something the flare never got a chance to. I swear the place was fairly paved with pearls. Like something in the 'Arabian Nights.' I wallowed in 'em. I hopped about like a kid, and sang things, and then I was afraid somebody might hear me—didn't know the place as well as I know it now—and I knocked off, and started to crawl among the pearls and scoop 'em up. Then I'd nothing to put them in, so I took off my undershirt, and tied them up in that, and buttoned my shirt again, and when I was crossing the track to get back to the beach, if I didn't come across a whole gang from Meliasi who'd been out at the trader's. And they asked me what I'd been looting. And I gave the bundle a hitch under my arm, and said, 'Pearls, old chap,' to the man who'd asked me. It looked *like* pearls, a lump of a parcel you could have put a turkey in! 'Well, if you won't tell, you won't,' says he sulkily; he was more than half drunk, and I cut on without any more talk to the beach, and when I got alongside of my boat, I heaved the bundle at the coxswain as if it was old boots, and then hopped in myself, and we shoved off. And the gang stood on the beach, and asked each other was it curios or kai-kai that I was so disobliging about. They were dead sure it was something I'd been looting from the natives.

"Of course, when I began to show up my hand a bit, a year or so after, they ought to have remembered that, but they didn't; it was too simple and ordinary for them. And they never saw me about these parts again. I took care of that. It's only a matter of starting a good way off, and working through

the bush. Sometimes, just for fun, I've started off when I knew I'd be seen, and led them the devil of a chase ten miles from here. They are pretty sick of their Conn hunts now, I reckon."

"Aren't you afraid of their getting at the thing through what you send away? Or do you send it?"

"Oh, heavens, yes! I've been sending to a decent old Jew chap in Melbourne ever since I found the place. Well, to answer you—did they find anything when you saw them loot my house?"

"I heard them swearing because they had only got some beads and trade belts."

Conn laughed the odd, soundless laugh which was so peculiarly his.

"I banked on their stupidity when I put those belts in. They're not belts in reality. Of course, we do trade with all sorts of gaudy stuff, but those strips of blue and yellow velvet are for testing the color of the pearls. You lay them on the stuff, and if a white pearl looks pure white on the blue, it's a good one, because, of course, the blue tends to make it look yellow. And if you can make a medium-colored one look all right on the yellow—really, the shade is more cream—it will do. But if it looks yellow, it's not worth sending down, from my point of view, unless it happens to be very big. And about the beads. Why, they *found* my pearls," had them in their hands. The lot I am sending down next boat was inside the beads."

"Inside! But how?"

"Easy enough. The old boy in Melbourne sent them up to me ready prepared, common-looking big trade beads with a gilt or a colored stripe round them. There's a join under the stripe. I've some neat little tools I use in detaching the halves; chloroform, too, to melt the special cement. Then I pack a pearl or two in each, and cement them up again, and smooth off. As for the very big ones, I put them into the

lumping big beads the nigs sling round their necks like a locket."

"Aren't you afraid they may get them in the mail bags some time? Or mightn't they wonder why you send down beads?"

Conn doubled over with laughter this time.

"It is such a game," he said, wiping his eyes. "Why, Fursey sends them for me!"

"What!"

"Fact, as I'm alive. He trades a good bit in ivory nuts; nice, clean things, and always carefully sewn up in bags. Well, the man who buys them is the man who buys my pearls. Fursey thinks he got a mighty bargain out of him when he screwed him for a shilling or two a bag above market price, and got him to sign a contract based on a false market report. It was put up between the Jew and me to make sure the nuts went to the same market all the time. And every now and then a bag has a string or two of beads in it. If the bags were to meet with an accident, it would be only the loss of a few pearls to me, not the loss of the whole show, because no one would think the beads anything but a mistake, or perhaps they might think a nig had stolen them and planted them there. Do you see?"

"I do, but I can't imagine how you get them into the bags; do you get a native to do it?"

"Not much! No, no one in the world but myself and the Jew and you knows or suspects anything about it. There's no great difficulty, after all; I wait for a dark night, and put my khaki and get into the store on the wharf; of course, the lock is a common one. And I undo the stitching of a bag or two, and slip the beads in, and put my private mark on them, and sew them up; use a dark lantern to do it, but, anyhow, I can work by feeling. Fursey and his gang get at the chap who makes up the mail

bag—we have a kind of amateur post office—and steam my letters; and they cut open a parcel with a pair of boots to be soled, and run pins in all over the boots, because I've seen the marks. And anything at all I send south by any chap on the steamer, orchids for a friend or a bag of those mangoes I have or stuffed birds—well, they go all through it, and rip everything up. I know. And all the time——" He bent over with the shaking, soundless laugh again.

Deirdre stood amazed. This was the man who had kept his secret, at the risk of his life, from all the island world, who might, if he liked, have kept the greater part of it even from her! And he had not said a word, not a single word, about secrecy. He had not once asked her to keep the matter to herself.

She knew she could not have done it. No matter how much she trusted any one, she would have found it impossible to refrain from just one little warning, a mere "I know it's unnecessary to ask you. Of course I trust you perfectly." And in the act of expression, the trust would have been smeared and spoiled.

He did not say the word, give the warning. Not while they were in the cave, nor while he was leading her back to the opening in the forest, climbing up to see that all was clear, and helping her through the hole on to firm ground above. Nor yet while they were walking through the bush, well lighted now by a high-sailing moon, to the open track and not-far-off house of the trader. He talked not at all, in fact, for, as he had hinted to her in the cave, it was dangerous to be found by any of the cannibal natives, wandering at night in the neighborhood of their sacred places. But when they had all but reached the little tin hut near the beach, where Carbery, the trader, lived with his white wife, he looked at her,

half mischievously, in the clear moonlight, and laid one finger, for a moment, on her lips. And then or thereafter, that was all the warning that he gave.

But all night long, after she had been introduced to Mrs. Carbery, had gone to bed, had seen the moon climb round from one side of her stretched mosquito net to the other, and heard the tide ebb out and out down the beach, turn and come back and wash beneath the walls, she lay awake, hands folded, eyes open wide, feeling, hour after hour, the strange light kiss of his finger on her lips. And she remembered and wondered whether Conn had not remembered, too, for all he said he had forgotten, the last two lines of the little wander song:

For love is with the lover's heart  
Wherever he may be.

#### CHAPTER IX.

It was a strange house of the Carberys, and a strange life that Deirdre led there.

Inanimate things in the New Cumberlands had a way of looking more or less alive, of suggesting strange comparisons. The township of Meliasi was like a company of frightened houses running away from the terrors of the forest to take refuge in the sea. The black, unknown hill ranges which lay behind took on the forms of lurking beasts of prey.

And Carbery's place, taking on the strange characteristics of this strangest of all lands, looked, to Deirdre, like a little white house that had poised desperately on the edge of deep water to drown itself, but had never got up courage to leap in. It was a lost-looking house, with wide, glassy eyes staring under its narrow veranda, and a ladder which fell from its door like a panting tongue. You went round a point of land to find it, and you found it where you did not expect, right on

the verge of the shore that had come up to meet you again. There was no particular road to it; you plunged out of the bush, and went along the sand, and there it was on its high piles, hanging over a deep inlet on one side, looking on the beach with the other. The sea beat, blue and green, below its door, and there were palm trees with thin, dancing shadows, and the wind always blew, and always swept the tinkling twigs of coral down the empty beach, where the sun, in defiance of astronomic laws, seemed always to be setting, low and gold. So, at least, Deirdre remembered it in days to come.

She remembered, too, that the lonesomeness, the far-away-ness, of the place, was beyond all telling. White people never seemed to come there—except one. Natives came, often, but they were sullen, silent, and half-scared, like all the New Cumberland folk. They made their bargains with Carbery: a ton of copra for a rusty old gun; sacks on sacks of fungus and ivory nuts for one bottle of the fiery gin sold by the traders. They stood about the store on the beach for a minute or two, bands of them, naked, oiled, and tattooed, with fierce eyes ringed round in black paint, carrying bundles of poisoned arrows in their hands, which they would scarcely lay down to inspect Carbery's goods or to unload the bundles that they carried for sale. Business concluded, they backed away into the forest, watching cannily not only the trader, but his wife and Deirdre, lest some treachery at the hands of the mistrusted whites should be suddenly loosed upon them. Then there would follow days when no one came, when the wind blew and blew and the sea crashed under the house and small, white crabs went spinning down the beach so fast that one thought they were only skeleton leaves blown seaward, and nothing happened at all, for ever and ever.

Carbery was a man without any particular characteristics or any marked nationality; he accepted Deirdre's board money, but never let her know, by word or sign, whether she was welcome in his house or the reverse. Deirdre thought, on the whole, that he took drugs, but she was not always sure. Mrs. Carbery was an Irishwoman of the most Celtic type, given to fits of a sort of exalted melancholy, and full of strange fancies and beliefs. She spent much of her time fortune telling with cups, with cards, with signs from the bush, the birds, the sea—anything, everything, for herself, for her husband, who took not the smallest interest, for Deirdre whenever Deirdre would let her.

"Ye are down-hearted, gurl," she told her. "Listen now, ye have no call to be, for whatever's the trouble, the cards spoke well last night and ye have only to wait."

"I'm not down-hearted a bit; I don't know what you mean. I'm enjoying myself lots," retorted Deirdre who had gone with the silent Carbery the day before to see some marvelous native dances in a hill village, and returned loaded, vicariously, with amazing curios. "I'm seeing things hardly anybody has seen. Did you ever go to the drum dance, where they dance with live pigs on their shoulders? It's——"

"Your card came up in the middle of the pack," flowed on Mrs. Carbery. "And the card with the ship, that manes sorrow when the dark side is turned to ye—this time it was for joy, though all the other times it has been for the black, black sorrow. I niver told ye that, but it has me heart scalded all the time since you came, that the black side was always against ye. Ye be to have had throuble, gurl, and maybe it's not run out yet."

"Every one has trouble," fenced Deirdre, feeling the drag of the half-forgotten noose anew. She had more

than her share just then, it seemed to her, noose or no noose. Conn had been to see her once, and not again. It was time, quite time, for him to have found his way over to Carbery's a second time, if he really wanted to. But the wind had blown and the tinkling corals danced away down the beach, and the ghostly little crabs flown about like leaves, day after day, and evening had filled the beach and bay with flooding, melancholy sunsets that seemed destined to end all things each time they came, and still, still, Conn of the hundred fights had kept away.

Mrs. Carbery's fortune tellings, foolish though they seemed, in reality raised her spirits somewhat; but she did not feel inclined for talk that afternoon. She felt she had to wander out yet once more along the wind-blown beach, to look for the twentieth time round the corner of the point, to assure herself, again, that there really was nobody, nobody at all, coming out of the bush.

And behold, there was some one!

Her heart jumped up, and then went down not quite all the way. It was not Conn; it was a white man, tallish, very slim, astonishingly well dressed, lightly bearded—Des Roseaux, in fact, the French commissioner, whom she had met, once, at the Mission Island. She knew him for a gossip. He was more welcome in that character than he could have been in any other. Surely he would have something or other to tell that would throw light.

Des Roseaux had. Seated on Carbery's veranda, pretending, with French courtesy, to like his host's fierce rum, which had assuredly never seen the Jamaica it bore on its label, Des Roseaux flirted, determinedly and naively, with Deirdre, which she did not mind in the least, and between times poured out all the gossip of Melias and the harbor islands like a walking newspaper.

She waited for Conn's name. She felt it was coming. It did.

"We are all delighted," declared Des Roseaux, "ravished, that Mr. Conn has got off so well. You will have heard, without doubt, mademoiselle, of his attack on that confoundable beast, Fursey. It was a little rough, but they say Fursey had broken into his house and has stole some of his goods. There is a whisper, but let's be discreet. I not whisper it. He had cause enough, assuredly, for what he has done."

"What was that?" asked Deirdre a little anxiously. She did not understand.

Mrs. Carbery had joined them, and was standing on the veranda in a tragic-muse attitude—not in the least affected, but natural—one hand set on the table, the other flung down and back. Her hair was more than commonly disheveled by the wind, and she had forgotten to take off her cooking apron. She, also, listened, but with the air of one to whom earthly affairs were not more important than one might imagine they were to the inhabitants of Mars.

"You have certainly heard about it," answered Des Roseaux incredulously. "No? You have not heard that Fursey has been caught, who was stealing some things in Conn's house, and that Conn has veritably given him the father and mother of a beating?"

Des Roseaux's English, at times, displayed strange lapses, of which he was simply unconscious. But Deirdre was too anxious to laugh.

"What has he done?" she asked. She scented trouble ahead. Was there nothing except trouble in the world?

"I will tell it to you. He has first fought this Fursey——"

"Fursey," remarked the man Carbery, looking through the bedroom door, "can beat his weight in wild cats." And immediately went away.

"It's true," allowed Des Roseaux, "but Conn, to what I think, is all the same his weight in wild leopards. And he has got better of Fursey, though, my word, they have a fight. Then Conn, he has said, so the boys tell, 'You are licked,' to Fursey, 'and now I will lick you proper,' and he has took his stingaree tail——"

"Oh!" The cry was from Deirdre. She had not lived in the island world without knowing what a stingaree tail could do.

"And he has cut that Fursey to a ribbon. And Fursey, he sings out—what do you call it?—and all the time now and then Conn, he say, 'Sing, damn you, sing till I tell you to stop.' It is as if he is mad. Fursey has been howling like a dog, and all the time all the more Conn, he tell him, 'You sing very well; now sing some more.' So it arrived that by and by the boys they are very much frightened, and they run and fetch Mr. Blackbury."

"Where did it all happen?" gasped Deirdre.

"In Meliasi, as I have told you"—he had not—"right in the street. Oh, I am not finish yet. It's magnificent. Mr. Blackbury, he came running, and when he came, Conn laughed and he has thrown down the stingaree tail, and he says, 'Take that thing to the Mission, and maybe, if they are good Christian, they will nurse it, and keep it out of hell a little while.' And then Blackbury, he begin to talk. Name of a man, Blackbury can talk! And if Conn cut Fursey to ribbon with his stingaree, then Blackbury do the same to Conn with his tongue. For why, he was intentioning to have Fursey deported on the next man-of-war, and now he say Fursey have a case, and why will the man-of-war listen to me when I talk? And he say very many things about the badness of Conn. So Conn stand there planted in the dust,

and he look very still, with that white-fire look he have, and he says, 'Mr. Blackbury, have you finished quite?' Mr. Blackbury makes a nod. Then Conn stands up very straight, after his fashion——"

Des Roseaux imitated it. Deirdre, listening with her heart still oddly out of place, and her hands turning cold, could see the whole scene—could see Conn, with the white fire in his face and eyes, standing over prostrate, beaten Fursey like St. George over the dragon, not once excusing himself because he would not drag her name into the dust of the fight.

"And he says, 'Then I will tell you; you would have done it yourself.' And Blackbury who's not any fool, cock his eye at him so"—Des Roseaux mimicked cleverly—"and he says, 'I would have done it myself, and why?' Conn look at him with that stare he have and he is shouting out at the top of his voice, 'Because Fursey have broken into my house, and open my safe. That is the why.' 'You have no other reason?' says Blackbury. 'Oh,' says Conn, 'he has tried to kill me sometimes. I remember now.' 'And me, I remember,' Blackbury is saying. 'No, but I will not denounce you to the man-of-war, when she come. But this conduct in the public street, it goes too far; you shall pay me a fine.' Conn say he have no right to make fines, but 'John Bull' Blackbury, he nod his big bull head, and he say, 'Right or no right, I will not have this; I shall fine you ten pounds for the new wharf.' Then Conn, he say, 'Right, sir,' and he put his hand into the pocket of Fursey, and pull out some nugget of gold. 'Here then, are you robbing the man?' says John Bull. 'Yes, I am robbing him of that he robbed me,' Conn is saying, and out he takes six big nugget. 'Bait for fools,' he say, and he give them to Blackbury. 'That is ten,' he say, and then he feel again,

and take out more. 'That is the last, and it shall be the fine for the next time, which I pay in advance,' he says. And all the time Fursey lie half dead. 'Conn, my boy, you will make a spoon or spoil a horn, but, anyhow, I think you will never make old bones,' says Blackbury, and he drop the gold in his pocket and saves himself."

Deirdre had listened with forced calm. She felt sick as the story went on. What was to come of it? And why had not Conn—oh, the Frenchman was speaking again.

"But you will forgive me, I've forgotten. Mr. Conn has intrust me with a letter. At your service, mademoiselle." He bowed as he handed Deirdre an envelope unlike the usual island stationery, which, as all the Pacific world knows, is scratchy gray outside, and lined "correspondence block" within. This was thick, rough-edged, and creamy-white, and the paper and envelope matched. It had a heavy black heading inside: "Wawa, New Cumberlands." So Deirdre saw when, asking pardon, she opened the letter; there might be an answer to send.

"Well, what a letter," said her mind. With her lips, she said:

"There's no answer; thank you very much for bringing it." Inaudibly she added, "Now do go away like a good man, and let me read it again."

Perhaps Des Roseaux, like a true Frenchman, guessed. At any rate, he stayed not very much longer. He had business, he explained, on the other side of the point; there was a French trader there whom he wished to see. They would all hope to see mademoiselle in Meliasi soon, and the British commissioner's whaleboat, as well as his own, were entirely at her disposal.

Deirdre, free, made at once for her room, followed by an entirely understanding remark from Mrs. Carbery:

"Daughter of Ayre, it bid to be the





Business concluded, they backed away into the forest, watching cannily not only the trader, but his wife and Deirdre, lest some treachery at the hands of the mistrusted whites should he suddenly loosed upon them.

ship card did it after all!" Sitting on her bed, Deirdre reread the letter.

It was without beginning or end.

He has got some of what he deserved. I shall see you in a week from to-day.

STEPHEN CONN.

"There's a good deal of voltage about that," she commented, studying the letter. She had not roamed the world for nothing. She knew, as the wise woman knows, that the man who writes in sentences like hammer strokes is the

man who expends himself in action. It is the weaver of beautiful words who hangs back at a pinch.

Besides, the form of the letter showed thought for her. If lost or mislaid, it contained nothing to start gossip, in spite of all that was between the lines. Deirdre made no mistake about that. She knew what Conn was coming for, as well as if he had written ten sheets to say.

And now, for the first time in her

life, temptation assailed her seriously. Why tell him?

She had found the man; she had met her fate. The poppy flower of her love for Adrian Shaw had bloomed and had its day, a brief day at best; nor had it been so very hard for her, after all, to pluck it up by the roots and cast it out. But this—this was a growing tree. The wrench of tearing it out from the hold it had taken, even so soon, was more than she could bear to think of. Conn was life, the meaning of life. What would be left if she sent him away? She understood what had been left when she dismissed the other man. There had always been, subconsciously, the feeling that, after all, it was not the end. The horizon had not closed down; the road by which the prince might come lay still open. Now he was here. If he went, there was no future any more. Life without hope—how did people bear it?

Some of them did not bear it. She understood that now. She had never understood before.

The house was unendurable. She went out on to the beach, and found a place where nobody could see her—had there been any one—and where she could see nothing but the thin palm trunks, curving like flower stems all round her, and the blue and green of the sea inlaid between. There she sat down, on the clinking coral shale, and put her head in her hands, and thought and thought.

Why tell him? What was she to do? Was she to go on wandering forever, "ever roaming with a hungry heart," shut off from all that made life worth the living? Was that wretched piece of schoolgirl folly to hang round her neck, like a diver's necklace of lead, forever, always dragging her down to sunless solitary depths? She could not understand how it was that she was the same creature as that priggish, bookish girl; how it came about that she must suf-

fer for the idiot's faults. What had Rogers, her student-husband really been like? She could hardly remember now. Dark, rather; tall, rather; romantic and ill-balanced with his half-cooked socialism and his high-flown gallantry; hard set, she remembered, against the very idea of a certain smug government post that his people were keeping warm for him wearing red ties, and inclined to vegetarianism. She had not had the faintest affection for him; but she remembered a certain vague kindness, born of gratitude, that had caused her to regret, at first, his mysterious disappearance. It had all worn out long before Shaw took the trouble of investigating the matter. She recalled how hard she had had to fight against feeling frankly disappointed that he wasn't dead. A few weeks after, she had written to the asylum doctor, asking him to let her know "if any change occurred." He had acknowledged her note, briefly, almost rudely. Since then, nothing. She knew Rogers would live forever. Lunatics always did.

"Why don't they set one free, then?" she had asked Adrian Shaw that day in Camacho's courtyard.

"There are two reasons," Shaw had answered, becoming the lawyer at once. "First, because it would open the way to collusion between parties who wished to separate. A stay in an asylum could always be arranged. Then, no doctor can say for certain that a lunatic cannot possibly recover. Some new discovery in medicine may take place. The X rays cured a good many hopeless cases, showed that the trouble was really a surgical matter. There might be something else to-morrow. And, anyhow, mental practice is full of surprises."

"Don't some countries grant divorce for lunacy?"

"Quite a number. I think myself that we should. But that has nothing

to do with your case. We must take the laws as they stand. Curse them!"

How well she remembered it all: the cold, professional voice expounding, the sudden break into a very human warmth and indignation, the wretched silence that followed. Over long ago, all that. Over, as the mad days in Dublin were over and dead. But their results remained; the seeds sown by them had come up and flourished. And she had to reap.

"I will not," she suddenly cried to the palms and the empty sea. "Why should I spoil my life? What possible sin do I commit, if I say nothing?"

"Bigamy," said a small voice within her. "Something one can be sent into penal servitude for."

"There's nobody here to send one to penal servitude," she answered the voice. "And bigamy's only a name. Just as the marriage was only a name. I am not married. Anyhow," she thought, rising and turning her face toward the mad little house which had run down to drown itself in the sea, and hesitated forever on the verge, "there's no reason at all to worry about it now; I haven't been asked by any one to marry him. And I won't think about it for another minute."

Long, yet short, was that week during which she waited for Conn, knowing well that he had chosen to give the whispers about her and Fursey and his own part in the drama full time to blow over before coming to see her again. Mrs. Carbery enlivened the days now and then with bursts of fortune telling, in which she professed to see a dark man who stood across Deirdre's path, a fair man who loved her, dangers threatening, fortunes hanging in the balance, and all the old stock in trade of the prophetess, yet curiously appropriate. She found Deirdre, one day, under the palm trees crying. She did not ask her what was the matter; it

appeared she knew without any foolish preliminary of asking.

"Daughter of Ayre," she remarked philosophically, "what does it matter? What does anything matter? Answer me that?"

"It matters a lot when you can't marry the man you like," answered Deirdre, stung into candor surprising even to herself. But Mrs. Carbery was not surprised.

"Not at all," was her reply, given in the usual tragic-prophetess attitude. "Sure, not at all. Or hardly anything at all. Gurl, do ye think anny of us does?"

"I—I don't know. I never looked at it like that."

"Then I can tell ye. No wan does. Do ye think I did? Did yer mother or yer father? They did not. Nor will you. Sure the cards would tell it, if nothin' else did. But it doesn't need the cards, daughter. Ye can read it in the worruld."

"It's a good game," said Blackbury, laying down his cards. "Bridge, they call it? There's your nine-and-six; you'd double your salary pretty soon if you played me every night."

"No, sir; you'd beat me. You pick it up wonderfully."

"Gatehouse," said the commissioner, unmoved, "you are a little bit of a liar, but not more than a secretary should be. I'm rather slow over it. Conn, there, picks it up like a pigeon picking up peas."

"Mr. Conn seems to pick up everything that's going," observed the secretary, shuffling the pack.

There was a double meaning in the words. Conn showed that he saw it; his hard, sea-gray eyes fixed themselves on Gatehouse, with an expression translatable as, "You and I will have a talk together one of these days." What the commissioner saw or did not see, no one could tell.

It was another of the white, windy nights familiar in Meliasi, well known to wanderers over the South Sea world. The southeaster, never known as the "trade" in local speech, was hard at work crashing the palm heads together, slatting and booming among the veranda blinds till a blind man might have supposed the residency was a ship, hard put to it to make port in the midst of a heavy gale. The three men who, with Des Roseaux, had just finished their game of cards, were sitting silent, all of them smoking, all of them thinking the "long, long thoughts" of the island world.

Des Roseaux spoke first.

"I see them almost," he said.

"Who?" was Gatehouse's natural question.

"All those women. Those women which we love."

"Who loves them, and why?" asked Blackbury somewhat dryly, pipe in one corner of his mouth. His hair, darkish, mixed with gray, and curly, stood up a little, just as John Bull's hair stands in Tenniel's immortal drawings. His broad, shaven cheeks, backed by narrow whiskers, were curved into the least of smiles, showing wonderfully perfect teeth. Again, one missed the top-boots and the bulldog; one felt they ought to have been there.

Des Roseaux went on.

"Never I see some men like this, who sit silent, who think, think, in some place far away from the home, but I see, also, the woman each man think about. On the deck of ships I've seen them, many a time, those women who walk like ghosts, thin, as glass, so that the sun or the moon shine through. No, I haven't known who they are, but I see them. Now, on this floor"—and he pointed dramatically to the empty space of veranda boarding—"there walk, unseen, four women, beautiful, sad, that the thoughts of us four men have create."

"Granted the beauty; how do you know they're sad?" asked Blackbury, round the stem of his pipe.

"Because we, all of us, are far away," was Des Roseaux's answer.

"Not good enough. They might be glad. They might have forgotten," said the commissioner lightly.

"Ah, no, my friend, it is sure that those four women—I mean the four that rises into our minds, all of us, when I speak, for no doubt there are others too——"

"No doubt, Don Juan."

"It is sure that those four will remember us, because woman remembers, always, the man who deserted her, and we have them deserted, all!"

"None of them deserted us, by any chance?" asked Conn cheerfully. Blackbury was silent.

Des Roseaux went on:

"It is simple. We are none of us husbands. We have loved, all of us, because every man not a youth has done so. I don't speak of the little ladies of the pavement, but of the serious affection. Well, we love, we do not marry, we go to the end of the world. Tell me there is not one we have all of us leaved behind who remember, who weep! All four, I see her! I think it was not willing that we lose that lady. It has been fate, perhaps."

"How do you know we're none of us husbands?" spoke Conn jestingly. "I might have a wife in every port between Galway and Meliasi for all you know." But he was thinking, as he spoke, of Deirdre, all alone with the trader and his wife away on the desolate mainland. Did she think he had deserted her? Hers was the figure which had flickered before his eyes as the Frenchman spoke.

"You are not married," pronounced Des Roseaux. "I am not married." He went on, exactly as if he were repeating a verb. "He," indicating Blackbury, "is not married. You," address-

ing the silent Gatehouse, "are not married, too; that is so?" He spoke as if certain of the fact.

Gatehouse looked up, and answered calmly:

"I am."

"News to me," remarked Blackbury.

Des Roseaux was staring dramatically.

"Married? She is dead?" he asked.

"Certainly not," replied the secretary.

"As much alive as I am."

"Why have you never told this?"

"I can't remember that any one asked me."

"But your wife—where is she?"

"Somewhere on earth."

"You know her alive?"

"Yes. Is this a confessional?"

"I demand pardon. I have been surprised. Will we have another game of cards? Bridge, I find it very good."

The subject was dropped at once, and cards went ahead for the rest of the evening. Conn played badly. He was intrigued and amazed by the secretary's confession. He had never thought of Gatehouse, if he had thought of him at all, as a married man. He felt vaguely that a fellow his own age had no right to be, so long as he himself wanted to and was not. It was, somehow, like Gatehouse's cheek. No, he had never liked him. One thing he was compelled to allow: Gatehouse was no liar. His character was tortuous and strange, beyond Conn's understanding at times, but it was, at least, sound. He need not have told the truth just now; it seemed he did not want to. Why?

"So far as I've yet grasped the game," came Blackbury's deep bass, "it seems to be considered bad form to revoke, partner; especially when—no apology, but wake up a bit if you can."

"Sorry," said Conn, wrenching back his attention to his hand.

They parted fairly late. The wind was down; the dead hours lying between twelve and four o'clock had

started on their course. Under the Residency Island, the sea lay marble, silver-veined. Lights were out in the town; a thick, sweet, chilly scent came from the forest lying close behind, a midnight, mysterious scent. The bison-shouldered hills where no man went heaved black against the moon; you would have sworn that they were thundering in a herd, down on the crouching houses that had run to the end of the land. There was a curious silence, fretted only, at its fringes, by the faint "fish-fish" of the sinking tide. A silence that did not merely happen; a silence that was kept.

Conn, Celt to the core, felt it. He wondered if the others—no. They did not love this sinister country as he loved it; its personality, for them, did not exist.

The French commissioner was yawning politely behind his hand, a vision of white sheets and vaporous mosquito netting, well tucked in, possessed him. Gatehouse, tall, curiously stately in his bearing, stood silent in the moonlight, arms folded so as to make his shoulders in white dinner coat, look very broad. He seemed, so standing, much more like a representative of royalty than the sturdy Blackbury. Britain's commissioner, also yawning a little, shook hands with his guests, and told Conn brusquely that he'd be obliged, when the latter next went to Carbery's—there was little, it seemed, that the commissioner did not know—if he brought Miss Rogers back with him to the residency. It was, Blackbury remarked, the only suitable place in the Cumberlands for her to stay, and since wandering females would come there, it was up to him, more or less, to see they didn't get into mischief.

"I've no idea at all of giving my good Des Roseaux a chance for his country by having an agreeable young female roasted on a stick by the cannibals within hail of Meliasi, as a sam-

ple of what British prestige amounts to," he observed. "Of course," he added, "you'll bring Mrs. Carbery, too. She'll be an addition to the house; she can keep the boys from combing their hair with the dinner forks, once in a way."

Something in the casual speech induced Conn to wring Blackbury's hand when saying good-by. After the tongue-lashing in public, down in Meliasi Street, which Conn had stood so unwillingly—this! He would swear that the commissioner understood the whole thing from beginning to end, in spite of the attitude he had officially taken. The liking, curiously filial, that a man in the twenties often feels for one in the fifties, took hold of him. He wondered, as he went down the winding track to the sea, why Blackbury hadn't ever married any one. Conn's thoughts ran on marriage. He had never seriously considered it before, and it looked good to him.

Up in the residency, Des Roseaux gone, the commissioner and his secretary were together. Gatehouse, much the taller man of the two, stood over Blackbury, majestic in his white suit and his folded arms, a little theatrical.

"Sir, can you give me leave of absence for a little?" he asked.

"Leave? Where to, man?"

"Am I obliged to answer that, sir, or may I take a holiday where I choose?"

"Of course you're not obliged to answer. Go where you like, though for the matter of that, there's nowhere to go. How long do you want?"

"Some weeks, if I may, sir?"

"You'll miss steamer day."

"Do you desire me to stay for it, sir?"

"Dash it, Gatehouse, you talk as if you were *Jane Eyre* addressing *Rochester*. I don't desire anything. If you want a holiday, take it by all means. When do you want to go?"

"To-morrow."

"Right. You might tell the boy to clear away and put out the lamps. Night!"

## CHAPTER X.

In the pearlers' house on the top of Wawaka Island, the little man, Furse, and the big man, Child, were conversing.

It was a curious place. Not at all what Deirdre, on that night of her visit to Conn's island, had pictured the pearlers' home. A sort of palace was what she had fancied it—white stone, perhaps; display of handsome vulgar things about the rooms, red-satin furniture, beds with gilt tops and dusty, coagulated silken draperies, such as she had seen in island hotels of the more pretentious kind.

As a fact, it was not built of stone, iron, or even wood. It was one immense leaf-thatch roof, dark with the smoke of years, angled above a space as big as a barn. That space was floored with white coral gravel, renewed as often as it grew dirty, which threw a faint reflected light from the six great doors up into the mysteries of the beamed and rafted roof. The walls were bark, paneled between poles. Windows, the place had none. Who wished to read or write—occupations not favored by the folk of Wawaka Island—might go and seat himself near one of the great doors never shut, save in hurricane weather. An ordinary northwester storm interfered scarce at all with any one's comfort, since the place was so large. Rain might dash in for yards at any opening, without coming near the ring of men smoking, drinking, or playing cards somewhere toward the center of the hall.

Once under the roof of Wawaka House, you saw the whole of it. There were no bedrooms; mosquito nets lay piled at intervals, and near them were rough but easy mattresses made by the



natives out of trade cottons and the silky fiber of the kapok nut. There was no kitchen; every man kicked his boy to cook his meals, when he felt like it, at any one of the cooking fires freely lit on the gravel floor. There was no dining room, since each man fed, like a wild dog of the forests, only as hunger urged him. Hammock chairs of canvas and bush timber stood about the floor, and somewhere near the middle of the huge place four tree trunks had been driven in the ground, a few planks nailed to their tops, and a few more stumps set in the earth about them. This was the dining table, seldom used. The pearlers preferred native fashion, and sat on the ground, plate on knees.

It was dusk now, going on to six o'clock, and the boats were in. Most of the day, about the immense reaches of Meliasi harbor, the sloops had been sailing, anchoring, and sailing again; the native crews had been diving, hard driven by kicks and curses. They were naked; they streamed with water, and shivered in spite of the heat. They squatted on the gunwales and drew in long breaths before they went down; panting a good deal and groaning to themselves. They did not want to dive for the pearlers of Meliasi—was it not known that no native lived more than a year or two at that cruel game? But they had no choice, for they had been blackbirded by the recruiting schooners and sold, at ten pounds a head, by the captains, on a nominal three-years' "engagement." Blackburny's ceaseless industry in following up and threatening the vessels in this hateful trade had done some good; it was always possible that a visiting man-of-war would high-handedly confiscate a schooner or two on his report. But enough remained to keep the pearling grounds supplied.

The "boys" had carried up to Wawaka storehouse the great tubs of pearl shell, roughly cleaned.

The shelling here was in no way like

shelling as practiced in the Thursday Island or Broome. There the shell itself was the chief object of the game; pearls, however valuable, being merely an incident. Here in the New Cumberland, the *lapi-lapi* was of so little value as not to be worth shipping away; pearls were the only things one counted on. They were good pearls on the whole, but not very plentiful. No one on Wawaka had made a fortune. The men of the pearling crowd worked separately; there were a score or more in all, and each owned his boat and his crew. But they had agreements about the partitioning of the different pearling banks, about the sharing out of boys when needed, and especially about keeping outsiders away.

Meliasi pearling grounds suited them; the labor was cheap and plentiful, the shell easy to get. Best of all, there was no law. In other places, men could be "had up" for knocking a boy on the head in a drunken fit, for stealing a boy from a village and keeping him captive, for underfeeding and overworking. Not so on Wawaka. It was an ideal life to the typical beach combers who made up Wawaka's colony, and they had agreed—coming together from various parts of the Pacific—to keep it to themselves. Toward that end, they built their common house, and arranged their laws, Fursey dictating most of them. To the same end they burned or sunk at anchor the vessels of rivals from any other part of the South Seas; sometimes they did worse, as unexplained accidents in the bush could testify. It came to be understood, in a year or two, that Meliasi shelling grounds were best let alone. And Wawaka reigned over them in triumph. And over Wawaka reigned Fursey, unchallenged, undisputed, cock of the walk—until the afternoon in Meliasi high street when Conn, the hundred-fighter, broke Fursey's spurs and cut his comb.



He held up his red, hairy little hand for silence, and when it was attained, said just two words: "She knows."

That was near a week past, and Fursey still lay most of the day on his kapok mattress, with a native woman to fan away the flies and bring him drink whenever he swore at her by way of asking for it. Fursey drank liquor that was not good for his wounds, which were neither light nor few, for Conn's stungaree tail, swung by a prac-

ticed hand, had left terrible cuts, and the tropic climate, which makes even a scratch perilous unless instantly dressed, had burned them into inflammation before any one thought of taking precautions. So Fursey was bandaged in many places, and could not move without cursing the universe, its author, and most especially Conn.

His mattress was placed somewhat toward the side of the huge building, in the center of which a dozen men were lying on mats, smoking, talking, and shouting out directions to the boys, who, hungry and tired, bent over cooking fires farther away. Some one was beating eggs with a loud clatter in a tin bowl; fish, frying on two or three fires, smelled savory. A native had just taken off the cover of a camp oven, and the bread sent forth pleasant invitation to hungry men. The owner of the oven, and the friend from whom he had borrowed the flour, were in hot dispute about the ownership of the bread, and blows seemed not far away. Nobody took the slightest notice. Wawaka was well used to shouts and curses, to worse things than either.

"Are you going to have any kai-kai?" asked Child in his toneless voice. He seemed, after some vague fashion, to have constituted himself nurse to Fursey.

"No," answered Fursey. Commonly he would have tacked a comet tail of his peculiar oaths on to such a refusal. To-night nothing but the pain following on movement of his limbs extracted curses from him; his ordinary talk was purged of all profane sayings. Child, who knew Fursey better than most, watched him as a man watches a lowering glass in hurricane time. When Fursey's safety valve was closed—

"Call them all here," said Fursey suddenly. "I want to speak to them. You can go." He pushed the fat, cowed-looking native girl, dressed in beads and a fringe of grass, away with his foot. She slunk off, looking oddly back at him. It may have been that Kalaka knew, or guessed, more than any one supposed. Women are quick.

Fursey was the chief, still, of his clan, although Conn, the hundred-fighter, had dimmed the glory of his prestige. Perhaps the pearl-ers respected less the man they had seen

beaten and howling like a dog in the main street of Meliasi, but they still feared him. Fursey's salient characteristic—that you never knew what he could do; especially, never could rely on his *not* doing anything on earth or sea—remained unchanged.

They came up, shambling with the Pacific slouch through the growing dimness of the huge white-floored hall. Somebody ought to have lit the hurricane lamps, but nobody had as yet. The cooking fires flared up and sank, as the wind from the sea swept through the open doors, died down, and rose again. The place was like a cave.

"Send the boys away," said Fursey very quietly. Mac, with the red hair, looked at Smith, and kicked him slyly. The kick said:

"Something up."

The boys, broken off in the midst of their cookery, bustled themselves away out of the place, chattering like monkeys. A few of them, in the dusk and confusion, snatched at bits of food, and carried them away. The others fought them for it, loudly, outside.

Fursey waited till the snarling and squabbling had gone off toward the huts occupied by the native labor, and then, heaving himself up painfully on one elbow, spoke.

And Child, once a Harrow boy, listening to him, understood, as he had understood before, how it was that the small ruffian kept his hold upon these men, and wondered dully, as he had wondered often, where and how Fursey might have taken the wrong turn which led him down the hill. For the man could speak; could throw his personality into his words, and send the words like bullets.

"They'd have liked him on Speech Day. I mean, if he hadn't been a bounder and an outsider. But he is," thought Child to himself. He looked at his nails, and felt pleased, as far as he had power left to be pleased by any-

thing, with their keeping and their shape.

Fursey was speaking.

"I want to know once and for all if you're men or mice. How long is it to go on? How long is this white-faced lout who caught me unawares and struck me like a dog, to make game of every one in the islands? He's to have a fine house and the wines and cigars and the flash furniture, isn't he, and to give himself the airs of a commissioner at least, and you and I are to live hard and work hard and watch him doing the swell? That's it, isn't it? That's what you like. You've no pride of your own, not you. You don't want the good things of the world. Kapok mattresses and a bottle of gin are enough for you. Gold, or something as good as gold, right under your feet, but you don't trouble about that. You're rats. What do rats want with gold? Give 'em a bit to nibble, and a hole to run into.

"And Conn—Conn!" He snarled over the word; he mouthed it as a cat snarls over and mouths a bone. "Conn beats you. Yes, I know what you're thinking as well as if you had said it; you're thinking that he beat me. No! That fight's only begun; make no mistake about it. But it never was on with you. You were beaten before you began. 'Conn, the hundred fighter,' some fool called him. Well, he's fought all of you, and a few more, and beat you—beat you! So perhaps the name fits, after all. You get up a hunt once in a way, and chase him into the bush, and he doubles, and laughs at you. And if it weren't for me, you'd go on with your silly Conn-hunts to the end of time. Well! I've done with them. Done. No more Conn-hunts for me."

He paused for a moment. He was an ugly little figure there in the leaping firelight, leaning on his elbow and looking up at the men. His red mustache stood out as a cat's whiskers

stand out; his face, bleached by confinement to the house, seemed boiling at white heat, so did it simmer and send up bubbles of evil feeling. Fursey knew the effect of the oratorical pause. He gave it full weight before beginning again.

"Now I have to ask you again, are you men or mice, and will you back me out in what I'm going to do? I swear, if you don't, it'll be done all the same, and the only difference will be that you'll get nothing out of it."

"Why're you tellin' us, then?" demanded the man called Mac, who had, it may be, a vein of Scotch caution somewhere.

"Because," said Fursey, shutting his eyes, like one weary of men's folly, "it's tiresome having to shoot people, when they get in your way." He opened his eyes again suddenly, and they glared catlike. "But don't you bank on my tiredness."

"What are ye goin' to get us? Conn's stuff?"

Fursey nodded, once, twice, three times. The men drew quick breaths; a little fire of questions broke out. Fursey answered none of them. He only held up his red, hairy little hand for silence, and when it was attained, said just two words:

"She knows."

"What, the girl?" asked Child, who had taken no part hitherto.

"The girl."

"Rats! Who'd tell a girl a thing worth thousands?"

It was a small, hairy man who spoke, a cockney-looking little fellow, somewhat unclean.

"Abstract speculation," said Fursey with a learned air, "has led many away. The question before the meeting is not who would tell a girl, but has any one told a girl? And to that, gentlemen, I answer without hesitation, 'Yes.' You would ask me"—he was very grand now—"how I know. On the

evening when we lost Conn, being at the time hot on the scent, Conn turned up, miles away, with the girl, both of them dirty and tired-looking, and he left her with the Carberys at the Long Beach. We are not possessed of information"—he was getting grander with every word—"as to where the evening was spent. But our informant, one Maraki, who was coming back from a head-hunting holiday in the bush, informs us that the said Conn, when parting with the lady, put his hand over her mouth, as a signal of silence, it being understood, even by the boy, to be such."

The men, standing in slouched attitudes about the coral shale, shifted their feet with a rattling sound, and one burst out, "My oath!"

"Very well," went on Fursey, who was beginning to show the effects of the last liquor, "the question is, are we going to stop here pigging along all our lives with a drunk now and then in Numea or Sydney, or are we going to make that pasty-faced little Mary tell us? What's a woman, anyhow, to stand between twenty men and what they want? What right has she to be dipping her paws in the pie that we've been hunting for years?"

"Hunting a pie," murmured Child dully. "Gad, what a metaphor! See it runnin' its little heart out through the bush, with a knife and fork stuck in it. Whoop, tallyho!"

No one took any notice of Child. It was not the custom, on Wawaka, to listen to what other people said except on rare occasions like Fursey's speech. You talked yourself, and tried to shout down the rest.

Among the pearl-ers, speech was bursting up like waters held back underneath lock gates, and only now released.

"Wants it all for herself, does she, little dear?"

"What price us?"

"I'm for making her talk."

"How will he—"

"But if they should—"

"Hurray, boys, we'll gut his mine for him!" And over all, like lightning playing above clouds, the flicker of careless oaths accompanied every speech on the pearl-ers' island.

Fursey, watching them as a coach driver watches his team tearing round a difficult corner, saw that the instant had arrived. Child had an odd fancy that he saw a bunch of reins in the hand of the little ruffian, as the latter, leaning from his couch, and scanning the faces of the standing men, gestured fiercely forward, and cried:

"Then, bullies, I'll tell you how we're going to do it, and if I fail—if I don't set you every one rolling in money within the next three weeks—you can drop me over the edge of Wawaka into deep water, for it'll be all that I'll be good for henceforth!"

A roar answered him.

"Here," said Fursey, tossing them a bottle of his own brandy, followed by another and another. "Warm your hearts up with that stuff, and let's talk."

Dusk deepened into night; the cooking fires, neglected, sank down, under the dark arch of the cavalike roof, from orange to amber, from amber to a pale geranium glow. Nobody lit the lamps; no boys returned to work. The pearl-ers, bunched by Fursey's bed, heads close together, as if any one, any one at all, on the summit of their remote, guarded island, could have overheard them, talked, commented, put questions, and answered them. Despite Fursey's brandy—which was, after all, not much to men accustomed to over-proof rum—their heads seemed clear; they were quieter than ordinary. This was no common game they had set out to play, nor were the stakes a trifle.

And Child, his huge limbs in their coarse khaki clothing doubled up as he

sat on the sand, watched and listened and said nothing. At the end of the discussion, when the men were separating, shouting for their boys, and going back to their neglected meal, Fursey turned to him, and said threateningly:

"No funny business from you, mind."

Child, with his huge arms twisted round his knees, of which the joints stood out like coconuts, shook his head.

"Why should she not go to hell like all the rest of us?" he asked.

"What do you mean? I'd have thought you had a fairly comfortable billet here, keeping accounts and so on, and eating your skin tight on next to no work."

"All the same," said Child, heaving himself up and making for the corner of the house where his own mattress was spread, "I've been in hell this long time, and I know it."

"Mad," said Fursey to the man Smith, who happened to be near.

"I should think so," answered Smith. "Any more of that fine old brandy, chief?"

Fursey, who loved all titles, handed another bottle to him royally. Smith had one accomplishment, one only, that of grinning and winking with one side of his face, while remaining unmoved as to the other. He did it now.

To the Residency Island in great state came that same afternoon Mrs. Carbery, accompanying Deirdre. It was the event of the good woman's life, and it caused heartburnings indescribable among the seven other ladies of Meliasi town. Blackburny had not thought well to ask one as chaperon, although almost any of them would have been better qualified, so far as social experience went, than Mrs. Carbery. But there were difficulties. The wife of the hotel keeper, British, drank. The wife of the hotel keeper, French, was sober, ladylike, even accomplished,

but she was only "wife" by courtesy. The wife of the big storekeeper had eight small children. The wife of the small storekeeper had consumption. The wives of one French trader and one English had native blood. The widow of the late captain of a late steamer that had been sunk in Meliasi harbor was partly out of her mind. So there remained only Mrs. Carbery.

They set out from the trading station, not in a canoe this time, but in all the splendors of Blackburny's official whaleboat, with its ten dark oarsmen, clad in blue kilts Vandyked with red braid, Fiji pattern, and wreaths of scarlet flowers. The coxswain, a man of importance, had two wreaths, also thirty-four rings of tortoise shell in his ears, and a very handsome boar's tusk thrust through his nose. Mrs. Carbery was dressed in a silk of dark green and red, rather like an umbrella, made in the fashion of the year of her marriage. Her eldest son, if he had lived, would have been fifteen that summer. She had a bonnet of feathers and jet, and very large, white sand shoes from the store, quite clean and new. Deirdre, in her inevitable transparent black, with a red flower placed cunningly under the brim of the wide black hat that shaded her from the afternoon sun, thought they must make a curiously contrasted pair. She was very Spanish looking that day. Those who knew Deirdre best had said that she always seemed to hark back to her memories of Cordova and Madrid when she was inclined to flirt.

She was so inclined to-day. Conn had come over, not as she and he had anticipated, quietly for a talk, but in the commissioner's boat, acting as Blackburny's representative. There had been scarcely any chance of speaking in private, and from what there was Deirdre had shrunk away. Her mood had changed. So long as Conn said nothing, nothing need happen; no deci-



sions need be made. The world was pleasant as it was; why not stay the march of events?

She had discarded, on boarding the island steamer, the plain gold ring she generally wore, which Rogers had not remembered to give her; it was a hurried, shamefaced purchase of her own, made in a Continental town. The misunderstanding about her name which had resulted in placing her on the passenger list as "Miss" Rogers suited her well enough. She was tired of traveling about as a widow. Since it seemed that she couldn't, mustn't, wasn't to tell the truth, it was as well to select the form of misunderstanding which promised the pleasantest results.

Conn, seated in the stern as near Deirdre as he could conveniently get, was not quite sorry to have his proposal put off. The girl couldn't get away, and there were oceans of time in the New Cumberlands. One had time enough for everything, and a bit more to that. No man really likes offering marriage; there is, perhaps, in every male, some drop remaining of the cave-man blood which wordlessly protests against the silly necessity of "asking" a woman at all. And one may always hope to manage the affair without absurd set phrases if one drifts long enough. So Conn, cheerfully determined on having this girl for his wife, and comfortably sure that she was interested in him, lay back in the whaleboat and looked with confidence into a golden easy future which was not there.

They swept alongside the residency pier, and brought up by the boat steps; Conn handed out the women, and followed them up to the house. The boat boys took his orders as they would have taken Blackbury's own. Not for nothing was he called the "little" king of the islands—a phrase which had no reference, naturally, to his height, a comfortable five feet ten.

Mrs. Carbery, her head upheld as

ladies in crinoline photographs uphold it, umbrella nursed in one arm, chin drawn in, eyes looking down, came after Deirdre, the picture of faded and out-of-date elegance. She had done her hair better than usual to-day, but a lock or two braved the wild southeaster for all that, and her veil was slatting like a flag. So absorbed was she with her conduct and her hair and her umbrella and her veil, that she did not notice until he was right upon her a man coming down from the residency, preceded by two or three natives carrying luggage. The man clearly had not noticed them coming up. Just here the path took several turns, and one might well be unaware of the presence of anybody else upon it.

"Hello, Gatehouse," greeted Conn. "Off for your inland trip?"

The secretary made some indefinite reply, and dashed past with hardly the bow which politeness demanded.

"Must be in a hurry," commented Conn. Deirdre said nothing.

But when they got up to the residency, and had been shown their rooms—two bare, pleasant, white-painted bedrooms overlooking the tops of the palms and an immense reach of sea, Deirdre, powdering at her glass, remarked through the open door to Mrs. Carbery:

"I can't help thinking I have seen that man before."

"Is it the man we seen on the road up, him who leaped past us the way the devil went through Athlone?"

"Yes."

"That one would be to be the secretary, me gurl. I never seen him, but I have heard spache of him, many's the time, and he does be very great for thramping the bush hither and to, among the neegurs. Me man, he say that Gatehouse is all the wan as the kings they do be having in it, an' he says that if Conn is the 'little king,' Gatehouse does be the big wan. But

that's all their chat, so it is, and I take no heed."

"Gatehouse? I don't remember the name. One meets so many people traveling. I suppose I've run across him somewhere."

Deirdre was unpinning her hair as she spoke, letting loose its dusk curtain over the dressing sack she had taken from her suit case. Mrs. Carbery looked at her with an appraising eye.

"Ye'd a right to be wed, an' you twenty-eight; sure, it's almost an old woman you are," she remarked, with a hairpin in her mouth. But there was neither jealousy nor discourtesy in her remark. Deirdre, knowing her own countrywomen, knew the peasant point of view. Mrs. Carbery had been married at twenty-five amid the loud thanksgivings of a family which had thought her fate past praying for. She was honestly anxious for Deirdre. She had taken a curious, suppressed sort of fancy to her; an echo of her own wrecked maternity, for there had been, and were not, sons and daughters of the Carberys.

Deirdre said nothing at all. She hated lying, much as a cat hates wet. Like the cat, she had been driven into the wet now and again, and hated it all the more for that. And any mention of marriage in her presence was like to bring the soil upon her dainty fur again. What could one do?

She was learning, she had learned, through all those interminable seven years, what it cost one to walk against the stream of any common custom or belief. Young, fascinating women couldn't but be married, or the other thing. Probably they were married, or the other thing, if they didn't seem to be. Thus ran public opinion, in Tene-riffe, in Colon, in Tahiti, in New Zealand. And all that Deirdre had to set against it was the tiresome, scandalous, never-believed true story, or the con-

venient not-quite-believed little lie. And neither saved her, quite. One always walked, bumping, against the crowd, if one stepped off the customary side of the road.

There was Mrs. Carbery now; she would have to lie to her in another moment. It was like a bad dream, this thing; the sort of dream that one dreams and wakes from for a minute, and then, falling asleep, dreams again and again. She did not like to lie to Mrs. Carbery.

The Irishwoman's hair was up as much as it ever was. She had tidied the fearful lace collar she wore, and was arranging the large bow of red-and-yellow silk that fastened it. As she pulled out the last loop, she turned to Deirdre, and said:

"Is that right, jewel? Yes? It's a clane pattern, it is. Tell me, daughter of Ayre, where's your husband?"

Deirdre was so taken aback that she could not answer. She felt her mouth dropping open; the hairbrush falling down in her slack hand by her side.

"Ye have no call to be wild, daughter," proceeded Mrs. Carbery calmly, "nor ye have no call to answer, if ye rather be keeping it to yourself."

"How did you—when did you—I mean, I don't understand what you mean," parried Deirdre desperately. What she now saw with perfect clearness was that she had not meant to tell Conn.

"It came over me," was Mrs. Carbery's comprehensive answer. "It has been coming this long time, I'm thinking; but just now, when I told ye ye had a right to be wed, it came like a strong weakness on me, and I knew it. Sure, that was why the marriage card would nivir come up for ye, daughter. Why would it, and you wed?"

"I'm not," broke out Deirdre determinedly. It was true, essentially, was it not? She had told herself so, many times.

The woman of forty, wife and mother, took the girl lightly by the shoulders, and turned her face to the light. Deirdre winced as two blue-gray eyes, full of women's knowledge, searched her.

"It's true," murmured Mrs. Carbery. "It's true—but, daughter, if it's true, what way is it the cards will not give you the marriage sign, nor the death sign, for married or dead such you must be daughter, so long as there's men in the world that's men?"

Deirdre, under that raking glance, raised one hand, and half awkwardly laid it across her cheek; she did not dare, quite, to cover her eyes. But Mrs. Carbery pounced upon the hand. It was the left. She held it in hers, and scanned the slim third finger.

Now Deirdre had not been wearing her bought wedding ring since she had left Sydney, abandoning half by accident her marriage tie. But a narrow ring worn for years leaves traces that do not wear out in a few weeks. Mrs. Carbery dropped the hand, full assurance in her eyes. With the delicacy of her race she asked no further questions, but, adjusting once again her ter-



"World's end, girlie," he said.  
"Lots of girls say they'd go to the end of the world with their lovers, but you've done it!"

rible collar, remarked that "by the way the neegurs was smashing cups in the kitchen, it would be to be time for tea."

They went out again on to the veranda, where Blackbury was waiting. Tea was brought; Conn, who seemed to be making a day of it, appeared from somewhere or other, and drank five cups of tea one after the other, making it perfectly clear, in a wordless way of his own, that he did this thing be-

cause Deirdre was pouring it. Deirdre, on whom the strain of the day was having odd effects, began to feel almost hysterical as she filled his cup again and again. She wanted to laugh and laugh and laugh, or was it cry? She could not be sure.

Suddenly, in the midst of tea, she felt with horror that her eyes were filling with tears. She made an excuse, got back to her room, and stood in the middle of it, clenching her hands. The room had four long glass doors, all widely open because of the heat. It gave on the veranda, on the inner dining room, on two different bedrooms. Every sound could be heard; every movement she made could be seen, unless she deliberately pulled down the blinds and closed the doors. There is no privacy in tropical houses; you must not be upset, or sulky, in a tropical house; you cannot have a sorrow or a box of chocolates, a joy or a cigar to yourself. Over the open partitions of the rooms, unceiled, through the swung-back, curtained doors, will issue forth the scent of your smoke or your sweets, the rip of an envelope, the tearing-up sound which accompanies the writing of love letters. If you fling yourself on your bed, he, she, and they will hear the creak of the mattress. If you lie awake at night, and turn and sigh, it will be as if you did it in a dormitory, where wakeful ears hear and curious minds draw conclusions. If you want to be alone, and wish yourself dead in peace, the mere closing of doors in a temperature of ninety in the shade, attracts the attention and amazement of all the house, and invites offers of quinine and sleeping powders. It is not good to have a sorrow or a perplexity in tin houses of Pacific lands.

Deirdre, the sun being almost down, felt there was but one thing to do—to get out of doors. She peered through her lace blind sidewise. Mrs. Carbery, seated very upright, with her

hair as spiky as a hedgehog's, was looking out over the blazing green of the harbor; she seemed wrapped in a prophetic trance, but her former guest knew by experience that she could even see and hear things invisible and inaudible, taking place in the neighborhood. Conn was staring at the lace blind; she wondered how much he could see. As for Blackbury, that good man, who never drank tea, he had had his two afternoon glasses of beer, and was more than half asleep.

There was a mirror behind the door. Deirdre crept to it, and did the things to her hair that every self-respecting woman does when she has made up her mind. She took her sunshade from the bed; it was a red one, and struck a high note of color against her black dress. The little Spanish shoes slipped off easily; they were small enough to be carried by their heels in one slim hand. Thank Providence for all those doors; now, down the back steps, shoes on. Under the coral tree; people could easily find one there, and the carpet of fallen flowers, thick and red, showed up the black. She could see the picture as if she had had a glass; red, black, and red, under the bare twigs of the tree; behind, a rampart of mangoes, dark green in the waning day. She had stopped thinking now; she was acting by instinct, driven like a leaf on the wind of some fierce impulse which had awakened when Mrs. Carbery silently turned away with that strange knowledge in her eyes. If she thought at all, it was in broken fragments:

"She shall not. I will never. Yes, he will! He will!"

There followed a minute of still suspense. Unable to bear any more, she lifted her head, and fluted, in the soft whistle scarcely less sweet than her voice, the last lines of "Gypsy Lover!" The tune was haunting, gay, and sad; the words, as every one knew, ran:

Far away, far away, where the hills are calling,

To the open roadway, to the roof of heaven's blue,

To the last long camp of all, when life's last dusk is falling,

Gypsy lover, gypsy lover, I'll go with you.

Then she waited. She was quite certain.

Light was failing now. A break in the trees gave her the sun's last gleam, but there was shadow, water-clear, and green, as evening shadows are on wooded islands, where the flight of steps came down behind the house. Conn's fair, ruffled head and white coat seemed swimming in that colorful dusk as he came to her. When he reached the last drift of pale sun, it was as if he had landed on a white shore at her feet!

They looked at each other, and knew it was to be said. Deirdre, who had thrown down the card that every man who respects himself must meet with a higher one, if he is in the game, felt a strange calm descend upon her. For Conn, now, to play. Her mind folded its hands, and watched, almost incurious.

Conn had turned white, as a man does in such moments. Before he spoke, Deirdre had time to note the extraordinary depth which his sudden pallor gave to his dark-lashed gray eyes; to see, with a needle stab of feeling more than half prophetic, that he was young, shingly young, because his years were the same as hers, who was not so very young now; to sense the primitive male's uneasy hatred for the words of slavish petition which custom exacted from him when all was understood already. Then, frowning a little, looking a little like a lover, and more like a boy repeating a set lesson, he spoke.

"I wanted to say something to you. I wanted to ask you to marry me."

There was just a perceptible pause before she replied—just time to hear

the shock of two long waves which broke upon the sand below.

"You are doing me a great honor," she said.

"Is that yes?"

"What you like," said Deirdre, flinging her cap over the windmills once for all, and warming the cold words with a look which swept his lips to her, as one meteor in dark night sweeps to another, and meets it in a shock of force and flame.

And again in the silence two waves burst upon the beach. Louder this time; the night was drawing up wild and dark. There would be lives lost on the reef before dawn, if that dull, warning voice spoke true.

Neither Conn nor Deirdre heard it. They drew apart, and in the settling dusk looked at each other with new eyes.

"I wanted this," said Conn, "since I came into my house that day and saw you and heard you at the piano. I said to myself, 'That's Deirdre, and Deirdre is the girl for me.' And you see, she is. I get what I want!"

"I don't," said Deirdre, "unless I pay horribly for it, like the man in the story—what was it?—who got the money because his son was dead." Her eyes grew dark with indefinite fear.

But Conn was cheerily commonplace.

"Oh, you've got nothing to pay for me," he assured her. "Such as they are, the goods don't cost you anything. Send no money. We trust you." He quoted from advertisements laughingly. He hardly knew what he said; he stared at her, seeing her new beauties because she was his, just as you and I see the cottage, the boat, the horse, with other eyes as soon as the receipt is signed by the seller. Was she not delicate, yet warm, warm as a flower in the sun, this thing of petal and perfume that he had won for his own?

To the girl, however, the sound of his words came chill. "We trust you."

The jest had an edge. He did trust her. It had never occurred to him to do anything else.

She stared, intrigued, at his face. What would a man like Conn, a man who wore the steel hand beneath the velvet glove, do, if he knew himself deceived? Not, indeed, as men often are deceived by women, but tricked nevertheless. She thought she could fear him under such circumstances. She knew she could not reckon on his actions. Was there not a spice of cruelty in his dealings with Fursey, though it had been done for her sake? Had she not heard that his natives feared him more than they loved him?

Determinedly she drove her fears away. Who was to tell him? Mrs. Carbery could not be really dangerous; whatever she might suspect, she knew nothing. There were people in Sydney who had heard her called Mrs. Rogers; the constant commerce with Sydney might make that risky, but, after all, she could say she was a widow, as she had always said. Could she not? For all she knew, it might be true. Certainly she was in communication with the asylum doctor, as Shaw had arranged for her, and certainly she had heard nothing at all for two years, but that might mean that Rogers was dead. She strove, in a flash, to believe that it did, knowing quite well that it only meant the doctor didn't approve of her, and wouldn't write if he could help it.

In any case, Deirdre, the ever-flying game and quarry of love; Deirdre, half overtaken once, but never truly captured; Deirdre, for the first time submitting willingly and with whole heart to a lover's kiss, could not feel herself a wife, a fettered woman, whatever her mind might have to say upon the matter. She drove the shadowy thought away determinedly. What was a form of words, to separate her from this man, this strong reality, her own?

She had her hour. Till the stars stood white among the mango tops, the lovers walked and talked and told each other all that lovers have to tell. Conn led her, at last, to a high, wind-blown point of the island, where, looking dizzily down, she could see in the starlight, thin lines of foam wrinkling and creeping on a shadowy beach, overswept by palms small as her hand; the seas untracked by liners, where no man ever came.

"World's end, girlie," he said. "Lots of girls say they'd go to the end of the world with their lovers, but you've done it! You jumped over the edge when you came to me. You see, dear"—he had already found her "little name," the name of long ago and home—"there's no going back for me. The western islands have me. Does it make you feel cold, all that?" For her hand, close in his, trembled.

"You understand," she said, "it does. It's—it's hard to break in, this air that isn't prepared for us. It isn't us, this country. It hates us; it's lying in wait."

"Yes," he said, looking out, and drawing a long breath. "But you haven't said it. One doesn't; one can't. That's part of it; there are no words for the things it is and does. If one might invent a kind of Esperanto, words for the things we know and can't say."

She laughed the laugh of one who knows.

"What would be the use?" she said. "We understand here, so we don't need the words. And what, do you think, would they mean to people in dear daylight England? We're in a kind of fourth dimension in the New Cumberlands. They don't understand fourth-dimension islands north of the line."

"It's getting its claws into us," said Conn, looking out and down. "Time to go in."

"Do you feel it?" she asked, leaning



close. "Yes, let's get into the little, little places and forget for a minute."

"For a minute," he said; "it wins some day."

"Is it death you mean?"

"Yes, and other things. Let's come down. I want you"—they were walking back now, like children hand in hand, toward the lights, palm-checked, of the residency veranda—"I want you to promise me something."

"What?"

"I want you to promise that you'll stop on this island, and not stir off it on any pretense till I see you again, unless you go with the commissioner himself."

"But why—why?"

"It doesn't matter why; you'll be promising to obey me some of these days—pretty soon, too. You might as well begin practicing a little, dear!"

Deirdre put up her hand to her flushed cheek, thankful for the shielding dusk. Her independence, the spirit that had carried her, alone and brave, through all the world, seemed to be failing her, and, strangely, she was almost glad it did.

"Yes, I'll promise," she answered in a voice she scarcely knew for her own.

"What a Griselda I shall be!" was her thought.

"That'll make my mind easy. It's not a place for you to be roaming about by yourself."

"I saw some of the villages with the Carberys."

"You had better not. You can go with me."

"Are you an army in yourself?" she asked playfully.

"I've a pretty tight hold on these natives. And other people!"

"So has Mr. Blackbury's secretary; what is his name? Gatehouse, I believe."

"Gatehouse," pronounced Conn, "doesn't really understand the New Cumberland. For a newcomer, he's horribly venturesome." Or rather, because he's a newcomer. He's a man of big abilities and might do big things with these people, but somehow I fancy he won't. Now don't let's talk of him any more; let's talk of us. I'll have to start off home in another minute. And don't forget your promise."

"I think it's rather unreasonable, you know," qualified the future Griselda.

"Never mind what you think, dear. You stick to it. Here's the veranda. That path is exactly two inches long. No, I won't come in; it's time for your dinner. One! One more! *And* a tiger!"

He let her go; he was gone. And Deirdre, flushed, heart running like the tick of a watch, paused for a full minute in the dark of the mango trees to recover her composure and smooth her hair.

Mrs. Carbery asked no question. Blackbury, playing patience after dinner while his guests knitted and read, looked at the younger of the two several times from under his heavy brows, but spoke only of the commonplaces of Meliasi life. The evening passed dully. When bedtime came Mrs. Carbery fixed the girl with a ghost-seeing gaze, and faintly ejaculated, "Daughter of Ayre!" as they parted under the veranda lamp. There was a tone of something like dismay in the familiar exclamation, which Deirdre, by now, understood to refer to her nationality, but which carried different meanings at different moments of stress. She did not try to elucidate its meaning of the present. She hurried to her room.

The last thought in her mind as she fell asleep was, "What would he do if he knew?"

# The Well Beloved

By Arthur Tuckerman

Author of

"The Silver Lady," "A Gentleman from India," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY  
T. VICTOR HALL



A critical moment in the life of Diana West when, after her husband's death, she reads his intimate study of herself.

NO cheering human sounds came from the villa, and because it happened to be a frivolous-looking little pink villa the silence was rather unbecoming to it. The windows in the single upper story were securely shuttered in green; the ground-floor windows, on the other hand, were wide open, permitting a glimpse of fragile lace curtains which billowed gently in the evening breeze.

It was quiet, too, on the broad, gravelled terrace which lay between the villa and the sea, so quiet that Diana West felt vaguely restless and heavy-hearted. A wave of sudden oppression swept over her; the stillness, somehow, seemed to intensify the helpless, bitter sense of loneliness which had gradually crept upon her during the last few weeks. And yet, all about her there was nothing but sheer beauty—the joyous, flippant, pastel-like beauty of a nature which demanded and recognized only happiness in humanity. Oblique shafts of gold from a lingering sun touched the rock-strewn shore; the Mediterranean—Arnold's own Mediterranean, to which he had been so devoted—was placid and somnolent, a mere sheet of opal. Inland, through a fretwork of stone pines she could see the red roofs of Bormes, the pale-yellow halo of mimosa which surrounded them.

There were curling wisps of smoke

above the village houses, and the evening breeze brought to her the pungent fragrance of burning eucalyptus logs.

She heard footsteps, then, crunching up the gravel path at the back of the villa. Quite instinctively she stepped through one of the tall, narrow windows into the darkened sanctuary of her drawing-room. She found herself wondering dimly whether she had the courage to face a visitor; it was many days since she had seen any one except Céleste.

The somberness of the room seemed to soothe her, to give her a new fortitude. She liked its gray walls, the decorous frieze of nymphs and flowers, the sympathetic glow of logs in the fireplace. White roses in a silver vase gleamed softly from a darkened corner; it was restful, almost like a caress.

Céleste entered, diffidently, bearing a card tray.

Mr. Dwight Kane  
New York

The maid's taut, mutinous lips showed clearly her resentment of the visitor, although her formal speech gave no hint of it.

"He says, madame, that he represents Monsieur West's publishers in America. He is staying at Hyères for several days and he came over *en auto* to have a word with madame, if that would be convenient to her. I believe,

madame, that it concerns Monsieur West's last book."

Diana West silenced her with a gentle frown. It was, she felt, unwise to allow Céleste to become garrulous.

Arnold's publishers! A tiny blade pierced her heart to reopen the old wound. It was just a little cruel, wasn't it, that the first human being to call on her should be one so intimately woven with Arnold's life work?

"Ask him to come in," she said with an air half resignation, half expectancy.

"The lights, madame, or the candles?"

"Only the candles, please, Céleste."

They were spiraled columns of blood-red wax, exotic things in their way. Only Arnold had pretended to understand that craving of hers, now and then, for the bizarre which was so irremediable with the rest of her nature.

She sought the mirror above the glimmering mantelpiece. Deftly she touched the rich chestnut mass of hair piled high upon her head, smoothed the lusterless silken folds of her dress; she surveyed herself critically through half-closed eyes, and realized suddenly how much the somberness of mourning suited her. How ridiculously young she looked. She had never worn black while Arnold had been alive; he used to assert with loud good humor that it gave him depression. Dear Arnold! Sometimes he had, in spite of his greatness of vision, been so adorably childish about trivial things. Her amber eyes widened, grew incredibly wistful. And here she was, prinking in the most commonplace, hateful way, for an utter stranger; obscurely it occurred to her that she didn't know herself at all.

She turned a placid gaze toward the stranger as he entered the room. A stout, brisk little man with heavy features, an unruly cockatoo's crest of black hair, keen gray eyes which seemed to appraise her through his thick-lensed spectacles.

"Mrs. West," he murmured, and clasped her hand with a delicacy which she found unexpected.

She sank down upon the sofa, with an unconsciously perfect poise of her slim, long figure, and motioned him to an armchair. She found herself waiting for him to speak, simply because she felt powerless to make tentative, commonplace remarks; the egoism of her suffering still remained.

"Before I go into this matter," he began, with a certain solicitude which faintly pleased her, "I feel I should ask you whether you care to—eh—discuss something that concerned Mr. West."

He paused, to cough nervously.

"Naturally, I realize your feelings; it's such a short time since——"

She decided that she rather liked him; his delicacy, even if studied, was, in a way, a tribute.

"Please"—she made a deprecating little gesture—"please go on with what you have to say. I—I've suffered, of course. But why should that prevent my talking of my husband's work with some one who knew it so thoroughly, and appreciated it? You know, he often spoke of you to me."

She saw that he was instantly more at ease; he became more fluent, more assertive.

"Yes. I had the privilege of reading and accepting his very first novel, Mrs. West, discovered him, as we publishers like to call it; that was way back in 1904. Since then I've seen him off and on many times.

"Now, here's what I've been coming to. About six months ago I dined with him in Paris. We talked over a number of business matters, and at the end of dinner he suddenly announced that he had a new manuscript nearly completed. What interested me particularly was his enormous enthusiasm about it; his eyes just seemed to shine when he spoke of it, and you know



what an intensely shy, quiet man he always was. Somehow I got the impression that he considered this thing far, far above his other works."

"Six months ago?" she interposed, with a shade of incredulity in her tone.

"Yes; in October I saw him. His death—you'll pardon the reference—came, naturally, as a staggering blow to me. Well, frankly, it occurred to me while I was stopping at Hyères for a week of golf that I might drop in and see you, to find out what his wishes were concerning this last manuscript.

He must have mentioned it to you."

Again she interrupted, her fingers plucking nervously at the sofa cushions:

"Oh, of course"—there was unaccountable relief in her voice—"you must mean that Persian story, 'Courage.' Yes, Mr. Kane; my husband sent that to Featherstone & Co. about two months before he died, and they answered by cable that they intended to bring it out in the autumn. Probably they haven't written to you yet about receiving it."

He shook his head slowly.

"N-no. I've been back to New York very recently. In fact I read 'Courage' myself, and was enthusiastic. It had all his superb sense of proportion, his extraordinary triumph of atmosphere. But I wasn't referring to 'Courage'; this story he spoke of

was about a woman—one woman."

"One woman?"

The look she gave him was half smiling, but her eyes were grave.

"I'm very much afraid there's been some mistake," she asserted. "When Arnold finished 'Courage' last summer he said that he was going to take a long, long rest; then this dreadful illness came on in November. I'm perfectly sure he hasn't written anything else. You see——"

She grew suddenly confidential, forgetting herself.

"You see, he was very lovely to me about his work. Often he would consult me about details, trivial feminine things a man couldn't always know. Perhaps I didn't help him much, but it made me very happy to think that I could.

"Arnold, you know, was considerably older than I. But then he used to remark that one of the reasons why he married me was to enable him to keep a kind of eternal grip on youth. He had a dread, a perfect horror of losing youth's point of view. I don't think he ever became really cynical, do you?"

There was a pleading note in her voice, and he deliberated calmly before replying.

"Never cynical. Yet he had a genuine contact with life, such as few writers have. His creed was too humane and his vision too poetic to admit of cynicism, but at heart he was essentially a realist. His little touches of irony, now and then, made his works all the more truthful."

He changed the subject, abruptly conveying to her the impression that business was to him, after all, a paramount consideration.

"Now, with regard to this manuscript. There's no possibility of its existing?"

She gave an apologetic little laugh.

"Of course there's a possibility. I meant that I didn't think it at all likely. However, if he did write the thing, it must be in this house because he decided several years ago to do all his work here. Do you mean you want me to look for it?"

"Perhaps you'd rather not—just yet?"

"You don't understand me," she protested. "Because my husband died here the villa has no absurd superstitions for me. As a matter of fact I love it because it's the one remaining link. Oh, you understand. I've been in his study several times since."

"Then," he said, rising, "I think it would be worth your while and mine to make a search for this manuscript. I believe he said he was going to call it 'The Young Wife.'"

Her mirth, subdued but genuine, rippled out for the first time at that.

"'The Young Wife'! Surely that doesn't sound in the least like Arnold West; it suggests more the younger school. He used abstract titles, you remember. 'Loyalty,' 'Courage'—things of that kind."

As he prepared to leave, she offered him a slender hand.

"Suppose," she suggested, "you come to luncheon, quietly, to-morrow. And to-night I'll have a look about the study to see if I find any traces of this mysterious manuscript."

She was smiling faintly; it was obvious that, in her mind, she did not even admit the possibility of the manuscript's existence.

With the utmost calm she climbed the stairs to Arnold's study late that night. It was a tranquil room, its plaster walls almost concealed by a close covering of book-strewn shelves; volumes leaning and tumbling over each other in an easy, careless disorder. There were old books and new, encyclopedias, biographies, books of travel, a few limp volumes of verse bound in exotic covers of suede—the whole a mute tribute to one man's catholicism. He had a pet theory, she remembered, that every man who wrote a book had some message to deliver, perhaps only one, a single truth, maybe, hidden in an overgrown mass of platitudes; but he used to insist that it was there, nevertheless, waiting to be discovered by the discerning reader.

She commenced to search with a certain dignified restraint through the clumsy drawers, the narrow pigeon-holes, of an oaken desk coated with a thin, fine layer of dust.

Twenty minutes later, as she started to leave the room with a pleasurable little feeling of having vindicated herself, she caught sight of a bulky package wrapped in brown paper, lying in a corner of the uppermost bookshelf. She smiled as she reached for it, a copy of "Courage," or one of his earlier works, no doubt, and yet, as she untied the strings an undefinable fear seemed to grip her.

A crisp white page, on top of many others, bearing the stark, typewritten words:

THE YOUNG WIFE  
by  
ARNOLD WEST

She must have gone downstairs; she did not recollect doing that; somehow, she found herself standing in the drawing-room. The room was strangely chilly as she drew up a chair and began to read.

She became, very soon, absorbed in the story. It was like Arnold, yet unlike him. She found the same seductive descriptions, the same perfection of atmosphere, which gave the reader an almost sensuous thrill of luxury, but the immense canvas which he had hitherto chosen to paint upon, life, humanity, helpless and groping, was absent. It was, rather, a study; a keen, incisive analysis of a single character, a woman, with many other figures in a vast, dim background. She began to realize, after she had read some twenty pages, that it far surpassed anything else he had ever written, but *why* hadn't he told her?

Céleste appeared, a blurred shadow upon the threshold.

"Leave the hall light burning," she heard herself say; "I shall stay down very late, probably."

The maid nodded, and vanished; her deliberate tread sounded from the creaking stairs. An ornolu clock upon the mantelpiece whirred tentatively, and struck twelve.

She rested the manuscript upon her knees, surrendering herself to the luxury of memories. While Arnold had lived he had been a constant source of amazement to her, a many-sided man, every now and then exhibiting some startling new aspect of his complex mind, a brain as clear as a crystal, yet with as many angles.

At the age of forty-three Arnold West had come to England from America, preceded by his literary fame. Chance had placed Diana Struthers next to him at a Mount Street dinner, and from that hour he had not permitted her to slip from his grasp. There had been nothing subtle in his campaign for her; it had been violent, insistent, inexorable. He had claimed her frankly as his right and the Struthers, gray-haired and dignified, had mutely surrendered; Diana herself, after a feeble, wholly ladylike protest, had given him her full love. After the marriage his adoration had continued, extravagant but beautiful, and during the three years which had followed they had been very, very happy.

She gathered up the typewritten pages once more. For half an hour she read, and then, abruptly, halted at a certain paragraph. Her eyes widened; she re-read it again and again; one of his touches of character, calmly and dispassionately written, but tinged with a faint destructive irony:

Outwardly charitable and broad-minded because it was the fashion of her age and class to appear so; inwardly she was critical to a degree, intolerant of those who failed, to conform with her inbred ideas of what men and women should be. The slightest lack of refinement seemed to appall her. Contemptuous of moral weakness in others.

With a violent mental effort she continued to read, and several pages farther on another paragraph held her breathless:

A patrician and a puritan. Coolly beautiful, but possessing an inexplicable streak of passion in her temperament constantly



at war with the rest of her; in her love for her husband she was a mixture of tenderness and shame.

For a perceptible instant she was motionless, her mind a chaotic void; she felt as if she had been struck. She turned to the beginning of the manuscript, hardly conscious of what she was doing, and hurriedly reread several chapters. Little, detached phrases seemed to leap out from the printed mass, to pierce her brain indelibly. Every subtle trait, every superficial mannerism of the story-woman was revealed and, all at once, she knew the woman to be herself. There were things related there in stark black type about herself at which she rebelled hotly, the more so because they were indisputably true, and because she had never realized them before. Resentment changed, with her, to a subdued fury. How could he have *dared* to understand her like that!

She scanned the pages feverishly, her cheeks burning but pallid, her fingers all a-tremble. Once she lit a cigarette, puffed at it once or twice in a perfunctory way, and tossed it to the grate.

Time fled, and minutes turned to hours. It was nearly three o'clock when she turned a page to find the heading of the final chapter.

And so, beneath the trivial superficialities, there was deep within her an indomitable purity and simplicity of spirit, a fundamental perfection of a kind which is rare and precious.

She stood erect, quivering; in her anger the words reached her as a thinly veiled

charity, a fatuous attempt at atonement for what had been revealed before. At the same time her wounded pride utterly prevented her from realizing their significance; emotion tore her philosophy to shreds.

Love, she assured herself with intense bitterness, had been with him purely a means to an end; she had been material, an artist's model. And to keep her perpetually before his vision he had resorted to a studied devotion which she had believed genuine. It was incredible, but undeniable; he had completed his task, stripped her for a gloating public.

And then, again, he had intended to publish this thing behind her back. Her pride was torn by that, too. Perhaps he would have come to her afterward to beg forgiveness in his easy, smiling way.



The bulky mass of it resisted her nervous fingers, and a single sheet fluttered to the floor, the last, unread sheet.

Perhaps she would have forgiven, because she was such a fool. A flare from the crackling logs suddenly turned crimson the manuscript within her hands; she stared at the tongues of flame, and drew in her breath sharply. The clock, queerly remote, struck three. She thought of a heap of crisp ashes in the morning, the meaning of which no one need ever know.

Her inflexible self-control left her. In a surge of hysterical joy she seized the manuscript and tried desperately to tear it. The bulky mass of it resisted her nervous fingers, and a single sheet fluttered to the floor, the last, unread sheet. She glanced down and saw that, unlike the others, it was covered with crudely scrawled handwriting.

A wave of curiosity conquered her, and she stooped to pick it up.

About this book, Diana. I had meant to tell you all along, but the doctors never allow me to talk with you about my work. It's about you, dearest, all of you. If parts of it hurt, if you think it is unjust, or that I had no right to do it, don't ever let it see print, I beg of you. To me our love shall always be paramount, everything else in my life infinitely unimportant. But when you read it, try to look upon it as a kind of monument to my devotion, for if I hadn't loved you as I have, I don't believe I could have written it. Do what you wish with it, Diana, and be true to yourself; only in the

knowledge that you will do that can I be happy.

Quite suddenly she buried her face in her hands and gave herself freely to hot, thankful tears.

It was the following afternoon. They had left the dining room and had strolled out to the wicker chairs and sunshine of the terrace. Céleste appeared with a tray, bringing them coffee in diminutive blue and gold cups. When she had gone Kane lighted a cigarette and turned to Diana West.

"I suppose," he ventured, with just a trace of nervousness, "that you didn't find that manuscript, after all?"

"I did find it," she told him very quietly. "I have it in the drawing-room, ready for you to take away." And she added in a tone that was almost humility: "It was very beautiful, although I didn't at all appreciate it at first."

She rose from her chair and went to the edge of the terrace, to gaze seaward.

"When you have read it," she said with a little catch in her voice, "please read it again, for you won't fully realize the beauty of it the first time, but then perhaps no one ever will."

Through tear-dimmed eyes she saw that he was mystified.



## LOVE AND TIME

A MOMENT since I saw your face,  
Your dusk-deep eyes with love aglow,  
And yet Time makes our parting seem  
A long, long year ago.

And should I chance upon you now,  
And all your charm and sweetness see,  
I'd swear it was since last we met  
A whole infinity.

CLINTON SCOLLARD.



## *New York Stage Successes*

# "Deburau"

A POETIC DRAMA

By Sacha Guitry

Adapted from the French by Granville Barker

JEAN GASPARD DEBURAU, acclaimed by the Paris critics of 1839 as "the greatest actor of our time—in whom you will find a thousand actors in one," was truly a "prince of pantomime." The traditional *Pierrot* of the stage, a freakish, frivolous character, became in the hands of Deburau, while still retaining his whimsicality, a creature of sensibility and sentiment, a figure of romance and even of true pathos.

All the Parisian world of fashion,

art, and letters were to be found, night after night, in the little out-of-the-way Théâtre des Funambules, where Deburau performed. Among the enthralled spectators of his delicate but perfect art might be seen the most brilliant and celebrated figures of French society: Victor Hugo, Alfred de Musset, Frederic Chopin, George Sand, Theophile Gautier, Sainte-Beuve, Marie Duplessis, Alexandre Dumas, and his young son, who later immor-

Courtesy of David Belasco, Producer, and G. P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers.



The last scene of the pantomime "Old Clo'," with Deburau (Lionel Atwill) as *Pierrot* and Margot Kelly as *Columbine*.

talized this same Marie Duplessis in his famous novel, "La Dame aux Camellias." (She was the prototype of *Marguerite Gautier* in "Camille.")

To the crowds of pleasure seekers gathered in front of the little theater, the barker of the troupe calls:  
Here you've Deburau,  
That marvelous Pierrot;  
The one and only,  
Supreme and lonely  
In his fame.  
For all the others, *all* Pierrots  
Before he came  
Were nothing better than puppets of wood.  
He's the first that has understood  
What can be made of that weird white figure.  
You sit and wonder how it's done.  
Never a wink to point the fun—  
And yet you laugh,

And yet you feel your eyes grow bigger.  
You may even feel the tears come tumbling.  
How does he do it, how with half—  
Not half, not a quarter—of what other actors  
get.

Words and music and make-up to help them!  
I must say it's humbling  
(If I were an actor I'd feel it so)  
To be left no—  
Nowhere at all by a mere Pierrot,  
By a bundle of white rags called Pierrot.  
And when Pierrot  
Is Deburau,  
That's so!

But years of hardship and struggle have embittered Deburau, and the success he has finally won is empty. He is particularly sensitive to the jealousy of his fellow comedians, and only Robillard seems to him a true friend. After

the evening's performance, in which he has risen to great heights, the manager and a few of the actors linger in the deserted auditorium.

DEBURAU (*indicating a whispering group*): Oh, can't you feel it in the air—how they hate me? Look at them there.

ROBILLARD: Well, my friend, that's the price of success.

DEBURAU: Then I can't pay it. Does that sound absurd?

BUT—I can't endure being looked at so. It makes me too wretched; indeed, it does. All I want, you know, is to be met with a smile, a kind word, And to feel I give the public pleasure. That's how I measure My success. And the rest I'm content to lose.

I don't hunger to be admired.

I could never be a hero.

I'm just a poor Pierrot.

Rather sad, and sometimes so tired,

I must make up my mind to be jolly at night

As I make up my face, black and white.

To a journalist who comes seeking an interview, an account of the actor's early days, Debureau turns sadly.

DEBURAU: Trained in art from my cradle, did you say?

Well, I hadn't a cradle. But, anyway,

If you bid

Me recall these things, here goes—

Though I've tried hard enough to forget them, God knows.

I was born in Roumania, at Constanza;

My father was a tight-rope dancer,

Which had been his father's bent.

He ran a circus, owned a little tent;

My mother took the money at the door;

He was called "The Equilibrarian Wonder."

Brothers and sisters? I had four:

Five of us, then, two girls and three boys.

There are greater joys,

Believe me, than tramping, early and late,

German roads, Russian roads, Polish roads—

All roads, you know, are endless.

And we were poor.

I was the fool of the family.

Whatever went wrong, it was always me,

Whoever kept balance, I always fell.

Oh, and I have been beaten finely

For nearly—but not quite—breaking my neck!

I believe I never brought off a trick.

"Clumsy lout! Clumsy lout! Clumsy lout!"

And many's the dinner I've gone without,

That practice, on my empty tummy

(She'd bring me scraps, afterward—my poor mummy)

Might make me more imperfect still!

We tramped, we tramped, on those roads unending,

From town to town,

Laying us down

Under a hedge, or in some shed.

Cold, oh, cold!

I wonder we didn't wake up dead

One of those fine mornings. Well, we were free.

The world was our tight-rope. I sometimes see

In my dreams the whole world tented beneath the fold

Of the skies. And that old rope slung so high in air

That it stretches over sea and land. And, one by one,

Their figures black against a shining sun,

My father, my brothers, my sisters, all silently, solemnly passing there.

That's all there is to tell you, every particle.

ROBILLARD (*getting into his cloak*): They have all gone. Dear fellow,

Why do you look so glum?

DEBURAU: Well, there's a smile for you.

Is that all right?

ROBILLARD: Quite right. Now a grateful one

For your own good luck—

One for the future.

Pierrot kisses  
the foot of his  
Columbine.





DEBURAU: This isn't a joke? BERTRAND: No, she asked for you—came and asked *me*. She brought you the roses; you'll see.





Deburau (Lionel Atwill)

Marie Duplessis (Elsie Mackay)

Deburau pauses, entranced by the spell of a woman's loveliness.

DEBURAU: Ah, the many smiles  
My past owes me! And still the debt's not  
paid  
For those first fifteen years  
Of such childish trials.  
But they burn deep when one salts the  
wounds with tears  
For the next fifteen, climbing out of the ruck  
Of neglect and misfortune! Ah, I mean  
that my boy  
Shall have his own childhood's joy and my  
childhood's joy  
Both. Such a fine little fellow, solemn and  
staid!  
He has my eyes and my voice,

And already my way with his hand.  
You know—  
Swinging the left hand—so!

ROBILLARD (*smiling*): You're running into  
a second edition.

DEBURAU: Yes, but I've planned  
Many revisions of it for him.  
It's not such an unselfish vision.  
For my filling his happiness to the brim  
The overflow will be mine, you see—

THE BARKER (*interrupting*): Deburau!  
A lady. She's the right sort, and  
She wants a word.

DEBURAU (*impatiently*): Another! This  
is really too absurd.

BARKER: She's a beauty.

DEBURAU: What do I care? (*He turns, however, to stand entranced by the spell of a woman's loveliness.*)

For once Deburau fails to discourage a feminine admirer by drawing out the miniature of his wife and asking, "Isn't she pretty?" The frail, exquisitely beautiful girl who awaits him with her homage is the famous Marie Duplessis, whom men go mad about. But Deburau, unaware of her identity, and noting the white flower in her hand, christens her "My Lady of the Camellias." Almost in a trance, he follows her blindly away.

A week passes. The curtain rises upon the boudoir of Marie Duplessis. Marie is idly playing the harpsichord, while Deburau sits talking half to himself.

MARIE: Darling, what are you muttering about?



DEBURAU: I shall always see you as first I saw you stand, with that flickering light upon you and that flower in your hand.

DEBURAU: I'm telling myself how happy I am. A prisoner, you know, Set free on a sudden, can only shout That he's free, and find nothing else to say.

So now I cram  
All the emotions that possess me  
Into "I am happy." At least I've discovered  
Why one fine day,  
Long ago, I was hurled  
Into this quaint world.  
I was born to be in love with you, my dear.  
Yes, from morning till evening and eve to  
morn

To fall deeper and deeper in love with you.  
And to think that no one could tell me that!  
I shouldn't have been hard to convince.  
Think of the time I've so cautiously wasted  
In follies!  
Looking for—what?  
When love was there.  
Caring for—who?  
When you were near.  
And this has lasted half my life.  
For twenty years I've been running away  
From women. I was afraid—

MARIE (*smiling*): Of your wife?

DEBURAU: Not a bit, nor of them. But  
just

Of being happy.  
Then came the sight of you.  
And now, if you please,  
On me, love's pauper and life's coward,  
All the wealth of the world has been show-  
ered.

Oh, my dear, oh, my dear,  
What a new thing my life is since you en-  
tered in it!

To have you and hold you all for my own!  
That's what I want, oh, that's what I want!  
(*He takes her in his arms.*)

MARIE (*resisting*): Gently, gently! Pier-  
rot has grown

Too like Pierrot.

We're not living in fairyland, you know.

Deburau is too blindly happy to suspect for a moment that he may be living in a fool's paradise. But it is true that Marie, although stirred by Deburau's devotion, has begun to be troubled by it. When he goes off, in a mood of self-reproach, to pay a visit to his neglected wife and the little boy he adores, Marie consults her old friend, Madame Ra-  
bouin, who is something of a fortune teller. The latter has really come to warn Marie not to carry the affair with Deburau too far.



DEBURAU: A prisoner, you know, set free on a sudden, can only shout that he's free, and find nothing else to say.

MARIE: Listen. I'd like to tell you this—  
You think I'm madly in love with him.

MADAME RABOUIN: He thinks so.

MARIE: Does it follow  
That he's right? I have learnt  
How to make men think so.

MADAME RABOUIN: Do you mean to say  
You're *not* in love with him?

MARIE: No. That's over.  
One night at the theater I was alone—  
All alone, and a little lonely.

Oh, no, it didn't start as a whim.

MADAME RABOUIN: You *did* love him.

MARIE: Oh, for a little it burnt  
Me up like a flame. I felt sure, quite sure,  
That I never should change. Then I seemed  
to recover.

After a little.

MADAME RABOUIN: So it's gone?

MARIE (*sadly*): Quite gone.

MADAME RABOUIN: Then d'you think that  
you need  
Have him here quite so much? For com-  
pleting the cure

It is rather a freak

To have him pay calls on you lasting a week.

MARIE: I know, I know. If only  
I knew what else to do, or what to say!  
But he's happy, so happy in thinking I love  
him,

And I haven't the heart to send him away.

I know it's wrong.

I know it's foolish. But you see  
Loving has mattered so little to me,  
And to him it seems to mean so much.

MADAME RABOUIN: Well, how long  
Is this going on for?

MARIE: Something may move him  
To leave me of his own accord.

MADAME RABOUIN: Good Lord!

In about a hundred years it may.

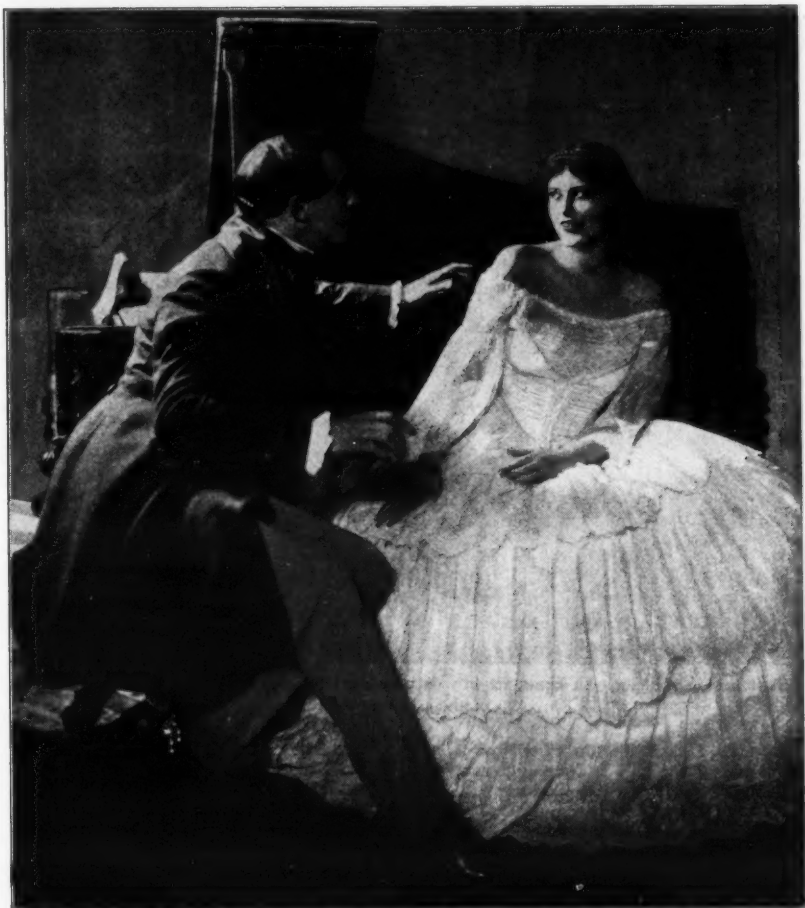
My pretty, this sort of thing doesn't pay!

MARIE: Pay? Oh, of course, I'm in the  
clutch

Of that beautiful word.

D'you know that I'm not twenty yet?

Girls of my age are still at school,  
But the only lesson I've learned quite pat



DEBURAU: Look at me; I'm your glass. Your face is like music. Smile. That's the melody. See it growing till each feature, from its place, catches the phrasing, completes the harmony.

Is how to say to a fool  
Of a man "I love you" without meaning a  
word of it.

But a rich and handsome young man named Armand Duval, who has for a long time adored the lovely Marie at a distance, has begged Madame Rabouin to intercede for him. When he calls, he is admitted. With passionate words of love he kneels at her feet. Her first

glimpse of him stirs her deeply. At last real love has touched her. She is enfolded in his arms when suddenly Deburau enters, bringing with him his little boy, his dog, and his bird. He has gone home to find that his wife has left him. Free at last, exultant, impatient, he has hastened with his treasures to his "Lady with the Camellia."

Stunned at the sight of a new lover already kneeling at her feet, he pauses. Then, slowly, tragically, he turns to the young man with an apology.

DEBURAU: Please don't move. I was just going.

As you see.

I didn't mean to interrupt.

But such a ridiculous thing has happened to me.

When I got home my wife had gone.

Since yesterday evening, if you please.

Gone—yes, bolted, that's what she's done.

Well, thank God, she's left me the boy.

She'd left me Fifi, too;

And the canary—think of that!

Well, of course, I shouted for joy—

Here was my dream coming true,

Here was the way to Fairyland clear.

What had Fate been at!

And off I ran to my dear—to my dear,

With my boy and my bird and Fifi.

Now comes the ridiculous part of the story.

She was so beautiful, and she loved me.

But when I found her

Around her

Had sprung up the hedge of a new happiness.

So I could do no less

Than turn away.

I could do no less because I loved her so.

I want her to know

And not to forget

That I never said an angry word.

There's nothing, tell her, she need regret.

All's as well as can be.

She must remember

That the happiness she gave me—

Joys without number,

Riches of happiness—

Will suffice to save me

For a long time from distress.

But when I've spent it all, and am quite poor again,

Perhaps I'll send to her, and then

Perhaps she'll come,

Bringing a little

Alms of love.

And now, please, will you say I'm going home?

I shall be there if she needs me.

Seven years pass, and still Deburau has not forgotten his lovely "Lady with the Camellia." The unfortunate love affair has been his undoing. At the height of his success he has lost interest in his art and retired from the stage. Crushed in spirit, and broken in health,

yet clinging to the forlorn hope that some day his loved one will come to him, he sits in his poor rooms, refusing to leave them for a moment lest he miss her when she comes. His son, Charles, now a youth of seventeen, with stage ambitions of his own, attempts to cheer his father by reminding him of the old days and his great success at the Théâtre Funambules.

DEBURAU: Oh, to sit and think of past successes

Is like—what's it like?—picking over a rag bag

Full of the faded, gaudy dresses

One used to wear.

Every old hag

Was beautiful once, she'll swear.

I'm humbler than most;

I only boast

To have been once a rather popular clown.

CHARLES: What's worth having but success?

DEBURAU: My boy, prick a vein in your arm and write this down

In your blood. Love's worth having. Unless

You can mix love with your drink of life

You'll go parched, no matter how heady

And glorious your wine of success and of fame is.

When your love comes be ready.

Seize her and hold her, love her madly.

It hurts to love madly. But, though the game is

Cruel, you must play it out to the finish.

It's a worse hurt to sit and sadly

Count the lost moments; the strife

Unstriven; the swinish

Wallowing lethargy in the sty

Of failure. Oh, yes, I exaggerate—

But, at any rate,

Have a try to live. Have a try!

But you don't need advice from me.

Every day as it gets near two

I see you with your eyes on the clock.

Silly boy, what are you blushing at?

Where do you go to?

CHARLES: The theater! The Funambules.

DEBURAU: Oh, is *that* where you meet her? Who is she?

CHARLES: There's no one at all. I go to see the play.

DEBURAU: To see the play! Do you like seeing plays?

CHARLES (*fervently*): Oh, yes!

DEBURAU: This is a bit of a shock.

I suppose you're not thinking, one of these days,  
Of becoming an—

CHARLES: An actor? I want to be.

DEBURAU: Do you? Indeed! Well, you might have told me

Before. Am I the sort of a man who bullies his children?

CHARLES (*eagerly*): Let me work hard for a year.

Give me a chance; I'll work so hard

For two years. Then, perhaps, I could—

DEBURAU: Do' you really think one can learn to act?

Now, in my turn, I'm going to betray them to you!

Don't be so sure I'm done with.

CHARLES: Of course you're not!

DEBURAU: There's enough left in me, perhaps, to blot

For a little while the sun of your rising fame.

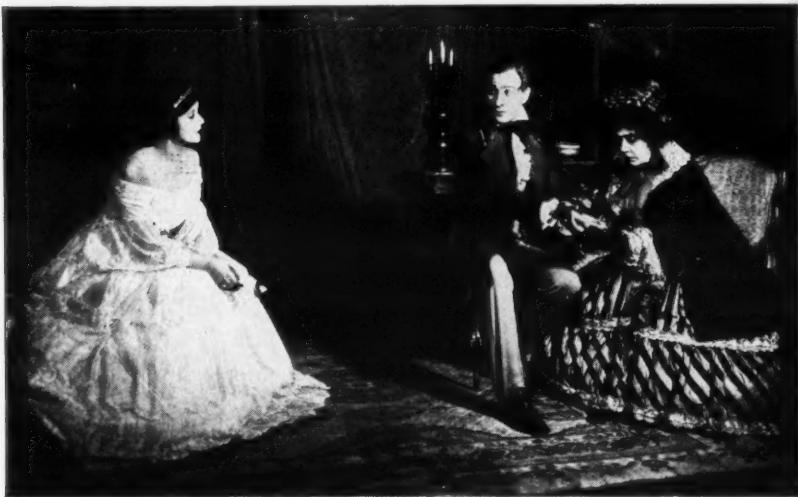
CHARLES (*hurt*): Papa, it's a shame

To make jokes like that.

DEBURAU: Now, listen to me.

You're not quite such a fool as you're trying to be.

You think you can act. Well, take my advice—



MADAME RABOUIN (Rose Coghlan): A palm I can read as you read books. Can you face the truth?

CHARLES: Well, one can try.

DEBURAU: Oh, there's nothing to stop you from trying.

There's nothing to stop a pig from flying  
If it has wings. My boy, this is sheer  
Folly! What sort of parts do you regard  
As likely to—well?

CHARLES: Parts you used to play.

DEBURAU (*sarcastically*): Parts that I—  
Really you flatter me; really I owe you  
Thanks for such an effort at tact.

CHARLES: Oh, of course, not ever in the way

You used to play them!

Though if you'd show me a trick or two—

DEBURAU (*bitterly*): A trick or two!

Of course, that's all my acting is—or was—  
A few tricks I stole from—never mind who!

For, remember, at this game no one fails twice—

Try something easy. (*Lightly*) You can learn to spout

As long as you've words to help you out—

CHARLES: No. I think I'd do better

Like you, in dumb show.

DEBURAU: As Pierrot?

CHARLES: Why not, why ever not? I'd like to know.

I can move, I can dance,

I'm as light on my feet as a fly,

I can try, I can but try.

DEBURAU (*coldly*): Very well, try.

No doubt we can get you a chance

In some little place in the provinces.

CHARLES: No, I think not. When one commences





Deburau, returning to his lovely "Lady of the Camellia," finds that already another kneels at her feet.

That way, one may finish the same way, too.  
Better start in Paris.

DEBURAU: No doubt that is the thing to do.

What name will you play under?

CHARLES (*in surprise*): What name?

DEBURAU: There are lots to be found.  
The chief thing about which to take care is  
That it looks well in print.  
It should also have an attractive sound  
And be easy to remember. It should give  
one a hint  
Of something familiar.

CHARLES: Why not my own name?

DEBURAU: What may that be?

CHARLES: Deburau.

DEBURAU: That happens to be mine, you see.

Your name is Charles.

CHARLES: Charles Deburau.

DEBURAU (*angrily*): Oh, no! Oh, no!  
Make a fool of yourself, if you must;  
Of yourself, if you please.  
But don't go dragging my name in the dust.  
My name!

Why, what is that, I should like to know,  
But another self, a second Deburau,  
That I've built up, piece by piece,  
Sweated and suffered to create it?  
And now you want to appropriate it.

Do the same for yourself, my lad,  
If you're such a genius.

Not a bad

Idea—in fact, most ingenious—

To slip into my shoes.

But it happens I don't choose

That you should. And don't you try it.

My name! The wealth of the world shan't  
buy it.

I'm down, out, and done for, you think,

While you're on the brink

Of success.

None the less,

While I've a breath in my body I swear

You don't play *my* parts in *my* name, so  
there!

But Deburau clearly loves his son.  
This harshness is only an indication of  
his own bitterness and unhappiness.  
Presently, however, his mood changes.  
For the doorbell rings and, oh, miracle  
of miracles, the caller is—at last—his  
"Lady of the Camellia!" She is frailer  
than ever, like a candle flame which a  
mere breath would blow out. Control-  
ling his emotion, he sends Charles away.  
Animated, eager, delighted, yet patheti-  
cally different from the lover Marie



MARIE: How old is he? DEBURAU: Sixteen. CHARLES: Seventeen, papa.

knew so long ago, Deburau bends to kiss her hand.

DEBURAU: Oh, my dear! I knew you'd come.

MARIE: My poor friend, lying so ill!

DEBURAU: I'm not ill.

MARIE: But they told me so. I'd a letter from Robillard, on Sunday.

DEBURAU (*disappointed*): It took that to bring you.

Never a thought of me when I was well?

MARIE: I have thought of you often.

DEBURAU: Loving me still?

MARIE: Still loving you—

As much as ever. I meant to come one day.

A dozen times I've started

And then not been able.

DEBURAU: Curse them!

MARIE: Why curse them?

DEBURAU: Because, since we parted,

A dozen times they've made you miserable.

And then you started to come to me.

Isn't that so?

MARIE (*hesitating*): Yes.

DEBURAU: You should have come. Are you unhappy?

MARIE: I have some unhappy times.

DEBURAU: Many?

MARIE: Yes; many. But since I love him, I prefer to be unhappy.

DEBURAU (*exultantly*): At last, at last you understand!

Now we can sing love's litany  
Together, hand in hand.

MARIE (*sadly*): I can't explain why I love him so.

It's that he's—

DEBURAU: Oh, I know, I know.  
Who should know if I don't know?

It's that he's a part of you,

He has the heart of you,

He *is* the heart of you—

Nothing's true if that's not true.

MARIE (*deeply moved*): Why did you sing the litany to me?

I think that taught me to believe in it.

You were the first to tell me—

DEBURAU: But now you're wiser than I,  
And you can take up the tale.

Now, now, you're not going to cry. That won't avail,

Will it? Now what's the trouble? Let's have it laid bare.

You must give me my share.

And Deburau, learning that Marie still loves Duval, and has only pity for

himself, and that she has brought her doctor to see him, allows her to go.

DEBURAU: Give me your hand.  
Listen, and try to understand.  
Smile at me. When I've let your hand go  
I shall hold your smile fast.  
Remember when this is past,  
That the less we have the less we have lost.  
With life at its best I wanted you most.  
Life's over;  
I've loved you. Now, go to your lover.

But it has been wonderful once more  
to feast his eyes on her gracious beauty,  
to see that well-remembered, dazzling  
smile, to realize that she has cared  
enough to come to see him! Strength  
and courage, stimulated by his talk with

the doctor, come back to him. When  
his son returns from the Théâtre  
Funambules, Debureau, for the first time  
in many months, takes an interest in the  
play.

DEBURAU: What are they playing to-  
night?

CHARLES: They're playing "Old Clo'."

DEBURAU: Who plays my part?

CHARLES: Legrand.

DEBURAU: Legrand! Does he, indeed?  
(Flings off his invalid's robe angrily.)

That's a poor sort of joke.

Give me my hat; give me my cloak.

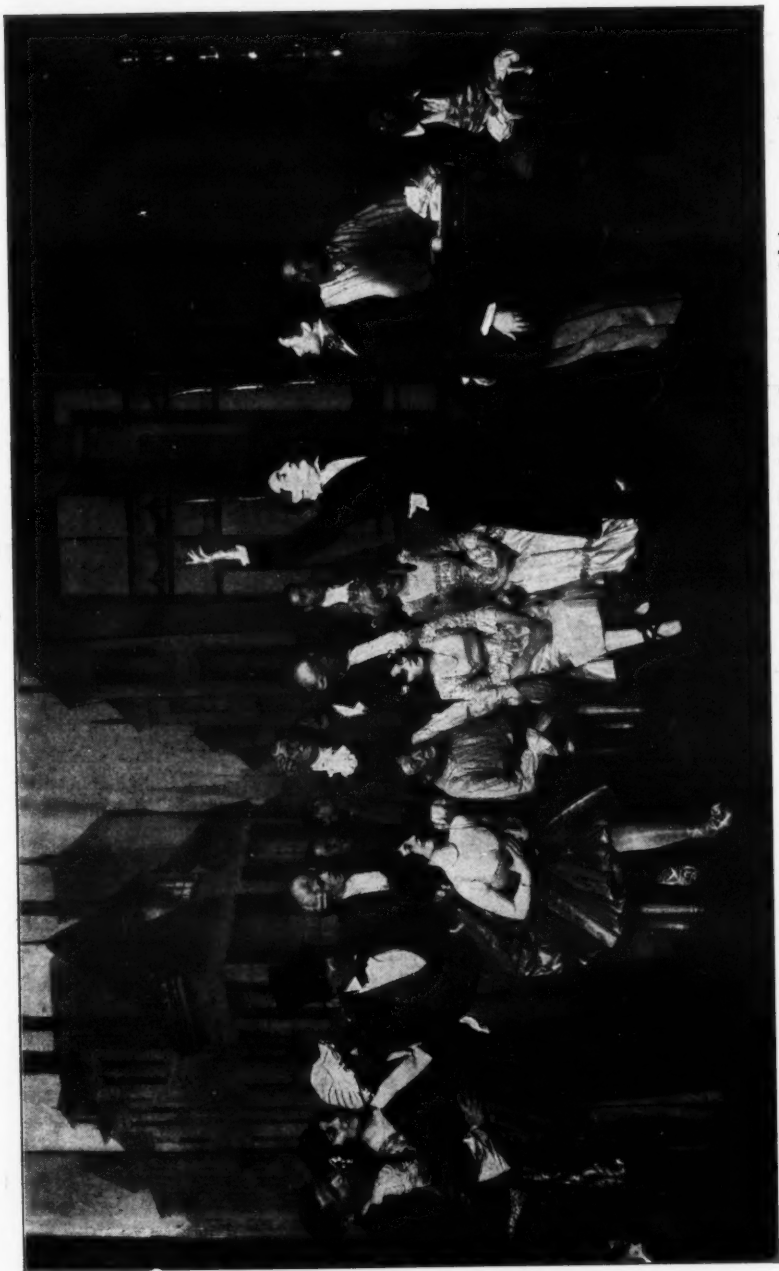
Don't stand and stare.

Run on and tell them I'll be there

And ready to start.



MARIE: They seem to die now if I wear them, but I always have them about me. Give me these, if you can spare them, for a talisman.



DEURAU (to his son): Give up my part? Not yet—not quite! We shall go shares in it to-night!

I fear Legrand's prospects are hardly bright.  
I play to-night!

That evening at the Théâtre Funambules the audience welcomes Deburau, but soon grows restless. For he is no longer the old Deburau; he seems to have lost his power and charm. He makes strenuous efforts to be amusing, but without success. He hesitates, makes one mistake after another. The audience begins to be bored, and presently a hiss is heard. Then another—and there swells a horrible noise of booing and cat-calling. The great *Pierrot* pauses, and then slowly approaches the footlights. He makes an appealing gesture to the audience and silence falls. He attempts to speak, but he cannot utter a single word. So he tells his audience by a few simple gestures that he is ill, that he can't go on, that he has played for the last time. He asks their forgiveness—he says good-by. By this time there is dead silence in the house. With infinite pathos, he kisses his hand, and the curtain falls. In silence the audience departs, some with tears raining down their cheeks. But a gloom greater than theirs is to be found backstage among the members of the cast, who grieve for their fellow player's misfortune. Deburau, emerging from his dressing room, on the arm of his son, Charles, hears Bertrand, the manager, ordering the painter to remove the name "Deburau" from the boards.

DEBURAU (*firmly*): Let my name be!

BERTRAND: This is nonsensical.

DEBURAU: Well, then, let me—  
At least let me put it right  
In my own way.

Wait and you'll see. (*He takes the brush from BERTRAND's hand and makes a capital "C" in front of the name of DEBURAU.*)

That's enough to efface me,

And it gives you Monsieur Charles Deburau to replace me.

CHARLES (*overjoyed*): Father!

BERTRAND: But—

DEBURAU: Don't worry. The contract can wait till one sees

What he's worth. Or you can give him my first.

Eight francs a week; that wasn't the worst Bargain that you ever made, my friend, was it?

Charles, Monsieur Bertrand engages you  
At eight francs a week.

BERTRAND: But he's a child.

DEBURAU (*smiling*): Think how a leading part ages you.

I was just his age when you took me on.

BERTRAND: But you supered.

DEBURAU: So I did,

And you told me I'd never learn to speak,  
And I never have. How I drove you wild!  
How you wept and how you chided!

A great experience; he ought not to lose it.

And if I were thinking of him alone—

But there's to-night and the theater's credit.

We have that to think of, have we not?

And, besides, let's allow for heredity;

I never had the father he's got.

BERTRAND: But he doesn't know the part.

DEBURAU: Yes, he does.

CHARLES: Oh, I do!

DEBURAU: Many's the time he has sat to spy it,

Such a little fellow, squeezed up in the wings,  
Prompting me unconsciously,

Gesturing things I was forgetting;

Prompting's an art. Well,

To-night I propose to prompt him;

To sit and spy from that corner dim.

Give up my part?

Not yet—not quite!

For to-night

We're to go shares in it—he and I.

CHARLES: My child's game was to play that I was you.

DEBURAU: That's a good game; now I can play it, too!

(*Then to the others*) Off with you and leave us alone;

Just for ten minutes give us the stage.

(*To the BARKER*) Get along, you, and think over your funniments.

Sorry to drive away every one. (*But they all beg to stay.*)

Do you really want to hear the sage

Talk to the boy? Oh, but I'm flattered!

A pretty plain talk without any ornaments,

And no one need stay to the end. (*He dresses CHARLES in the costume of Pierrot and puts on the white make-up of the clown.*)

Now, pay attention, if you please.

Get this firmly fixed in your head:

Acting's as easy as shelling peas,

If— (*Taking the boy's face between his palms and looking at him earnestly*)

Tell me now and tell me truly:



DEBURAU: And *love* your work. Remember, the actor's calling is the finest in the world. I tell you it's an art that has its springs in the heart of all mankind.

Are you nervous about to-night?  
Oh, of course, I know that you'll duly  
Say that you are. But are you in a real  
fright?

CHARLES (*stammering*): I—I'm terrified!

BERTRAND (*in dismay*): Now I ask you,  
if he's terrified—

DEBURAU: As he should be, he's terrified.  
But that's our own affair—

The audience doesn't want a share.  
(To CHARLES) Shake in your shoes in your  
dressing room,  
Feel sure you've forgotten

Your part. Turn so pale  
That rouge won't redden you. Be certain  
you'll fail.

Walk forth as a criminal walks to his doom,  
But, once on the scene—

Once the raps start to sound and the cur-  
tain to rise—

Let your fright fly away with it up to the  
flies.

Once you're over the brink,  
If you must think of yourself at all, think  
You're the greatest actor the world's ever  
seen!



Now, remember this: be sincere  
 But never be trite.  
 And never, oh, never  
 Try to be—or to seem—too clever.  
 What you mean, when you do it, must of  
 course be quite clear.  
 And it must seem quite clear what you're  
*going to do.*  
 For an audience must always feel sure of  
 you.  
 Yet, when you do it, it must seem acci-  
 dentally done.  
 That's not so difficult as it sounds.  
 It's an effect quite easy to get  
 When an audience is watching you,  
 And a play hangs on you.  
 Ah—and before I forget,  
 Never, on any grounds,  
 Never play second to any one!  
 Now, as to our dumb show, always do  
 Whatever comes most naturally to you.  
 An audience isn't difficult  
 To please; if you find them so, that's your  
 fault.  
 It's only that they won't stand blundering.  
 You must never leave them wondering  
 What on earth it is you're at.  
 Now! The ordinary gestures, the "Yes, sir,"  
 and "No, sir,"  
 You can't go wrong over. When you come  
 to expressing  
 Something elaborate, first *think it right.*  
 Nothing hard in that.  
 Quite still now! Don't move.  
 If you want to convey "What a pretty girl!"  
 Think it and do  
 Whatever comes to your head to do.  
 If it's madness or love,  
 That you're frightened, or pleased, that your  
 head's in a whirl,  
*Think, think hard, think intensely*  
 That you *are* in love, or in a fright,  
 Then, when you can't keep still any longer,  
 When your feelings grow stronger  
 Than you, still hold yourself tensely  
 And keep yourself in it  
 For the millionth part of a minute,  
*Then—let yourself go*  
 And it'll come right.  
 Don't copy me;  
 Don't copy any one.  
 A professor  
 Of acting can only teach you his faults.  
 But—let me see—  
 There may be one  
 Or two tricks. (*He shows CHARLES some*  
*trifles of technique and gesture.*)  
 And each time that you play  
 A part, add something new  
 While something you may  
 Feel is less good, take away.

And—*love your work.*  
 Remember, the actor's calling  
 Is the finest in the world.  
 Is it something a little galling  
 When, with lip politely curled  
 And a supercilious smirk,  
 You are told to your face  
 That the theater has no place  
 Among important things?  
 I tell you, it's an art  
 That has its springs  
 In the heart  
 Of all mankind.  
 So, when the world's wiseacres slight it,  
 never mind.  
 And the triumph of triumphs, to hold  
 A whole house breathless, to mold  
 Them to tears or to laughter!  
 Would I sell that power for a king's  
 Ransom? Picture it now:  
 The curtain has risen.  
 For a moment after,  
 Silence. Row upon row,  
 So silent you'd swear you could hear the  
 shakings  
 Of the earrings that bedizen  
 That lady there.  
 Or the manager as he absconds with your  
 share  
 Of the evening's takings.  
 All of a sudden you fling  
 Across the footlights to them  
 Some trivial thing  
 That takes their fancy.  
 Then it begins.  
 A whisper. They sway to a rhythm.  
 First it's only a smile you can see  
 Like a ripple that has just  
 Been raised by that tiny gust.  
 Of laughter. But the laughter will keep  
 growing  
 Till a gale of it is blowing;  
 A gale that spins  
 Away with it, amid the silence it has broken  
 Into a thousand pieces, every token  
 Of dullness, of care,  
 Of trouble, of despair.  
 That's what they come hoping for. It isn't  
 worth their while  
 To sit three hours in a theater on the chance  
 that you'll make them smile,  
 Though, of course, there's credit in making  
 them smile.  
 But high renown  
 We leave to the tragedians.  
 It's they who will always be called the great  
 actors.  
 Odd, that in this world it's only expedients  
 For making folk miserable bring you fame.  
 Well, let them stick to it,  
 That cold academical glory of theirs,

Their temple of High art, we can't add a touch to it.

Let them look down

On you, call you a clown.

Let the great world neglect and forget you.  
Who cares?

It does the same

To all its other benefactors.

You get your pay and more than your pay

If just for a little you draw the breath

Of that glory that passes so quickly away,

Popularity. (DEBURAU now turns CHARLES around, completely dressed and made up as Pierrot.)

Ladies and gentlemen, my successor,

Latest recruit to your ranks.

Please to give him a sympathetic

Welcome. My sincerest thanks.

He is to be my best performance

And my last, that's certain.

Here I stand prophetic:

"A greater succeeds a lesser."

I finish; he's ready to commence.

Prompter, stand by the curtain.

(To CHARLES) But for a minute more, listen to me.

I look back over my life,

Its failures and successes,

Its importance and strife;

Now, at the end of it, this is

The lesson I've learnt by heart.

There are two unfading things,

Love and Art.

And not so regretfully

I see them to-day take wings;

I've had my share of both in a way.

But if you've heard me say

Love was all that counted,

I was wrong.

Love without Art amounted

To something for a season;

But it can't hold you long.

Art without love? That's rhyme without reason.

No, you must strive

To hold them both by a hand,

If you want to understand

What life is innermost;

If you want to be

Both happy and alive.

To-night you may make your first success.

If you do, there'll be many more to follow.

Do you think they'll be enough to content you?

Do you think the applause will never sound hollow?

Do you think that is all the good God meant you

To have when he gave you the heart of a man

In the skin of an actor? Gather life's joys while you can;

Life's sorrows, life's dangers;

It's your birthright to know them.

A man's life, nothing less!

Give your audience whole-heartedly all that you owe them;

But remember that, friends as they are, they are strangers,

And while their applauding still echoes above you

Find some one to love—and, oh, some one to love you.

The big drum is heard off left. The players scatter for the wings and the voice of the barker is heard outside.

BARKER: Gentlemen and ladies—

Our trade is

To amuse you;

And to-night we offer something new,

A new Pierrot,

To take the place of our world-famed Deburau.

I know what you're going to say, my man: "No one can."

Well, I excuse you,

There are precious few

Who could. But I'm not boasting. I believe

That in these serious matters one can't afford to deceive

One's public; and I never do.

But we *are* going to deceive you, too.

For when you see him, with one accord

You'll say: "That is Deburau!"

And you'll be right, though you'll be wrong.

Well, I give you my word

That this Deburau

Who is not Deburau, and *is* Deburau—

Gentlemen, does it take you so long

To guess?

Who could be as great a success

As Deburau, and the possessor

Of all his secrets?

Who but one?

His son!

We present you to-night with his son and successor.

CHARLES: Father, what lies he's telling!

What a sham!

DEBURAU: Hush! That's how he earns his money.

THE BARKER (calling out): Playgoers of Paris,

The performance is about to begin,

And he who tarries

Stands a chance of not getting in—

(DEBURAU, as the curtain rises, stands quietly in the wings, listening to the tumultuous welcome which is being given to the new Pierrot.)

# Freedom

By William Almon Wolff

ILLUSTRATED BY E. C. CASWELL

**How a young wife, thrilled and disturbed by  
the return of an earlier lover, finds freedom.**



WHEN Mary Blake was still Mary Frothingham she knew Jack Adair, and, for a little while, was engaged to him. She was very young then; twenty, perhaps. In years Adair was not so much older than she; he must have been twenty-four or five. But in sophistication, in experience, in knowledge of the world, he might have belonged to another generation. A handsome chap he was; blue-eyed, black-haired, wistful, when he chose, like all the Irish; a lover in a hundred.

He tore at Mary's heart with the passion of his wooing. He awoke the woman, sleeping still within her when he came. He made her imagination the captive of his pleading eyes and his singing lips; stormed the citadel of her spirit; was lover and master in one—and all in scarcely more time than the telling takes.

For Mary it was new and wonderful beyond all words. For Adair it was not so new, but not less wonderful. There are those who know him who believe to this day that he loved Mary as he never loved a woman before her and as he will never love again. That is as it may be; it is certain that he did love her, with all the fire and the passion in him.

As for her, she wore his ring; she wore her love for him unashamed, like a badge of pride and glory, for all to see. She was a lovely creature then; slim, virginal, with great dark eyes which opened wide to stare at you; with full, red lips; brown hair, that

curled a little, and clung about her head; very straight and lithe; full of grace in all her movements. Not beautiful, perhaps; her features were not cast in the classic mold. But no one cared for that.

Had their wedding followed swiftly upon that splendid wooing, who knows? It could not. Adair had his youth, his charm, his prospects, and those fair enough. But he was not ready yet to keep a wife; even he, for all his eagerness, had to admit that they must wait. And so they settled down to an engagement uncertain in its term.

They were not afraid of that. Both of them were fiercely sure that they could wait to the end of time, if they must. But that was precisely what they could not do. He was possessive, exacting, jealous; if he scaled the heights of a splendid, romantic passion, he could descend, as well, to compensating depths. He played fair; he kept to the rules. But they must be rules of his own making.

They had bad times, sharp quarrels, that seemed to grow out of nothing; there were hot, angry words that left their scars behind after the lips that had framed them had met in reconciliation. They were much alike; proud, both of them, as Lucifer; high and quick in temper; generous enough, but swift to heed their impulses.

She turned white, one day, at something he had said; stood still, facing him, her eyes wide, the fingers of her right hand tugging at her ring.



In his anger, he went out, without another word.

"Take it!" she said, and held it out to him.

He may have hesitated. But he took it, in his anger; went out, then, without another word. She waited just too long; when terror overcame her anger and her pride, and she called him back, he could not hear, or would not heed her if he heard. She thought he heard her; her fallen pride was raised again.

Chance fed the impulse he had to take flight; he seized upon a sudden offer, and was at sea within three days, bound for Europe. She had no written word from him; sometimes she heard news, in devious way. But he was silent.

She was outraged at first, then deeply hurt. She blamed herself, but felt, too, although this she could not quite ex-

plain to herself, that she had come upon the trace of some base alloy in him. And she was silent, too.

She had a decent pride, as well as pride of the baser, lesser sort which had played its part in the disaster. No one knew how deeply she was hurt, how much she suffered. She was gentler after the first pain had passed, and softer, and yet, at the same time, her fiber was hardened; she was like steel that has been newly tempered.

For a long time no suitor who was persistent enough to trouble her sought to fill Adair's place. Men made gestures, but she would have none of them. She had little to do with men, in any way, for a year or two; she went about very little, almost gave up dancing. America went into the war, after a time; that helped her, since there was so much work that she could do. Adair, she heard, had enlisted abroad.

When Warren Blake came back to Maybrook to live she scarcely remembered him, although she had known him when they were children. She cast some spell over him from the beginning; she saw at once that here was a man who would not stop with a gesture, a man concerning whom she must, sooner or later, make a decision.

She liked him immensely, from the beginning. She liked his mind; a clear, logical mind, which saw things through, and wasn't to be turned back upon a road of thought because of anything that might lie at its end. She enjoyed talking with him; working things out. She liked his restraint; liked him because he weighed things, waited to be sure.

It surprised her to realize, one day, that she might marry Warren Blake. The time was coming, she knew, when she must decide that question, and it bewildered her, and disgusted her a little, too, to find that there could, conceivably, be more than one answer, and that a negative one. She had cherished

the ideal of fidelity to something lost. But she was shaken, now, and she had the honesty to admit it to herself, and an ability, that she had caught from Blake, perhaps, to analyze the state of her own mind.

The plain truth was that she didn't really know what she wanted to do. She didn't love Blake as she had loved Adair; that stood out. Yet she cared more for him than, only a little time before, she had supposed she could ever care for a man again. It wasn't at all likely, she knew, that she would ever love Blake or any one else as she had loved Adair; that was something, she thought, that you could do only once, whether early or late. And she didn't want to go on, fading a little all the time, growing, finally, into one of those frustrated, desiccated women who find themselves all at once old and defeated, balked of fulfillment of their destiny. She wanted to marry, and make a home, and have children.

And that, when he asked her, at last, to marry him, was what she told him. She was perfectly frank.

"I've never liked any one half so well," she said. "I could marry you—oh, easily! But I want to be fair, Warren! I haven't forgotten Jack. I think I'll never forget him, never stop missing him, just a little. I can remember the sound of his voice and——"

She was still for a moment. Blake waited. His eyes were dark with anger. He knew the whole story by now. Naturally enough, he had dismissed her self-reproach; his reaction to her story of the episode was simple, primitive, direct. This chap Adair needed kicking; that was all. Plenty more like him.

"I do like the idea of marrying you, Warren," she said slowly, almost impersonally. "All the little, dear, ordinary things we'd do and want and wait for. Getting the money to build on that lot of yours. Putting buttons on

things for you, having you—oh, take care of me!"

"I'd do that!" said Warren, between his teeth. "Oh, my dear, you have that coming to you."

"Don't be sorry for me," she said. "I'm acting like a pig. I think ever so many girls must have to work this thing out, Warren. About marrying when there's some one else. I ought to do it by myself, and then say 'yes,' or 'no,' and if it was 'yes,' never let you guess there'd been anything. But, Warren, I couldn't. I'm afraid——"

"Afraid?" he said.

"Afraid not to let you know there was this—this ghost that might walk sometimes. You see, I'll be bothered about it, I suppose, sometimes, and I—I might not be nice to you. I might want you to let me be alone."

"I can do that! If you'll only marry me."

"That way? On—on my own terms? They're beastly terms, Warren, dear."

"On any terms!"

She hesitated long enough, even so, to frighten him. But in the end they were married. And in her marriage Mary found comfort, peace, a quiet and growing happiness. She loved him; she yielded to that idea slowly, gradually, but with an increasing certainty; yielded to it with wonder, at first, and something almost like resentment. It was hard for her to acknowledge that there could be another sort of love than that which Adair had had from her. Yet it was so.

The image of Adair grew less and less clear in her mind; his stature diminished with the growing importance of her husband to her well-being and her happiness. Adair was submerged in the rising tide of the little things that went to make up her new life with Warren. It was a good life, rich and full. Its mosaic might have seemed to be dull, to be made of ordinary fragments, and yet it satisfied her.

And it was a comfortable life. She could enjoy Warren. He took so many things for granted; he was so stable. He wasn't jealous, in foolish, absurd ways. Yet she knew, and was perversely glad of the knowledge, that he could be jealous enough, once given cause.

That quick, sharp, flashing temper of hers still troubled her at times. But whereas a spark from her had been enough to kindle an answering, angry fire in Adair, Warren just smiled at her outbursts. It wasn't that he was tolerant, or that he treated her like a spoiled child that must be indulged; he smiled because he could see something really amusing. And that she couldn't stand.

So they moved along, together, building up their new, common life out of the fusion of their two beings; busy in that task that thousands of young people set out together every year to perform. The children they were to have, beckoned to them from the future; they had their house to think about; there were countless trifles, enormous in their cumulative weight.

Warren went to his office in the city every day; she stayed at home, in Maybrook. She did most of her own work, and was happy in doing it. She found time, still, for her friends, for golf, for a concert, now and then, during the season.

They saved their money for the building of the new house, but they didn't push economy to uncomfortable extremes. They dined in town and did a theater now and then; they had the club, in Maybrook. They hadn't bought a new car, but, after all, they had Warren's old roadster.

They had been married a little more than a year when Mary went into town, one day early in the winter, to a concert. She and Helen Johnson were to have lunch together first. But at the hotel where they were to meet, Mary was called to the telephone by Helen,





"Mary!" he said. "What luck! Landed  
this morning—saw you across  
the room."

who couldn't come, as one of the children had a cough. Helen was so glad Mary had both the tickets; perhaps, even at this late hour, she could get hold of some one for the other seat.

Mary left the booth smiling. She didn't know about that other seat. Warren—but Warren, she knew, was in court, and so beyond her reach. And there was to be music that afternoon one didn't want to hear with just any one. It was Tschaiikowsky's "Sixth Symphony." You wanted just the right

person beside you for that, Mary felt. No, she was quite content to go alone. She went in to eat her solitary lunch.

It was still early when she finished; she ordered coffee merely to linger, rather than because she wanted it. And, just as she dropped a lump of sugar in her cup, a shadow fell across the table, and she looked up into Jack Adair's eyes.

"Mary!" he said. "What luck! Landed this morning—saw you across the room."

She said nothing at all. Some time later she thought that must have been because she wanted so to look at him.

"You—you're lovelier than ever! It—it's Mary *Blake*, isn't it? I heard that you were married."

"Yes." Her eyes wandered over him. He was older. There were lines in his face that she didn't remember. But he was still Jack Adair.

"You've just landed?"

"This morning. Got in too late last night. I stayed over after the armistice, relief work for a while, then a job. I still have that. This is a vacation, in a way. Oh, Mary, I'm glad to see you!"

"I'm glad to see you, too."

"Mind if I sit down?" He didn't wait for her answer. "Wish I'd seen you sooner! Think of wasting a whole lunch!"

She smiled vaguely.

"Still living at Maybrook?"

"Yes. Warren comes in to his office. He's a lawyer. You'll find things about the same there. Are you coming out?"

"If I can. I haven't any plans, really, yet. I must go to Washington next week. How's your mother?"

"Splendid!"

Mary wanted to scream. To sit like that, exchanging inanities, small talk! And to have to go alone to hear that music and remember her first hearing of it, with Adair's hot hand embracing hers. She couldn't do that. And suddenly she had a daring thought.

"This afternoon—are you free?" she asked. "I've an extra ticket for a concert. Would you like to come?"

"Mary, I'm dreaming! Of course I'll come."

The agonizing tension of her nerves relaxed. That would be better—oh, infinitely better! She feared her memories so much more than she feared her avatar. She paid for her lunch; stood

up, straight and slim in her pretty, simple furs, her severely plain suit.

He put her into a cab, though she protested; they had plenty of time to walk, she said.

Mary was all aglow; happier, she thought, than she had ever been. For she felt safe. It was only now that she let herself think of how greatly she had dreaded this encounter. Now it had come; the blow had fallen, and glanced off; she was unscathed. She could meet Jack's eyes; give him her hand as he helped her from the cab; plod with him up the endless stone steps they had climbed together so often in the old days; rehearse with him a score of things out of their flaming past, and feel still the even beating of her heart, and know that all was safe and well with her and her new life.

There was new music first—Ravel, Cyril Scott. She laughed at Jack's complaints.

"They're so beastly clever," he said. "Heavens, I'll be glad to hear old Tschaiowsky's tunes."

They disputed, amiably enough. Mary reminded him of the horrid fate of the critics who had damned Wagner. She liked the newer men, though she did not forswear the old.

But then, after the intermission, the lights were dimmed again, and the house fell silent as the first notes of the symphony were heard, that symphony which its maker called the "Pathétique," written in the agony of loss and disillusionment, with the shadow of death upon him. They sat still, and Mary, all at once, felt terribly alone.

The glorious rush of the third movement caught her up; exalted her. Every atom of her being answered the clamorous challenge of the kettledrums; she had to fight, at the end, to keep herself from crying out. In the brief pause she turned to Adair, to meet his blazing eyes. They dwelt still in that palace of sound; their eyes and their

spirits met within it. And then a wailing note from the violins shattered it; brought it down in sudden, pitiful ruin, and they fell with it.

In tragic beauty the music moved on to that strange, infinitely melancholy close, in which, at last, the music fades out in the deep muttering of the muted contrabasses. All Mary's sense of triumph was gone; she shared, with the maker of that music, the memory and the thought of love forever lost; her memories crowded upon her. And fate made her move, ever so slightly; brought her into a sudden contact with Adair. His hand fell upon hers, covered it, held it, and held it to the end, desperately.

They sprang apart as the uncertain, hesitating applause broke out; they stared at one another, with frightened eyes, in the full flood of light.

"I've never stopped loving you," said Adair simply. "I don't know why God let me live."

Mary said nothing. There was nothing for her to say. There was no trace of color in her cheeks; her eyes were wide; her lips were trembling a little.

"You care, too," he said. And that, also, he said very simply, as one stating a plain, an obvious, fact, and altogether without triumph, or satisfaction.

"Yes. I don't quite know how much. Some of me cares a great deal."

They made their way to the street, moving along slowly with the crowd. They turned toward Fifth Avenue.

"We must see one another again."

She nodded.

"To-morrow? Can you come in for lunch?"

"Yes. Telephone to me in the morning."

When he would have said more she checked him.

"Not now, please, Jack. Put me in a cab. I'll go straight to the station."

Her instinct sent her home, as straight and as swiftly as she could

go. She caught an earlier train than Warren's, and was glad when he was a little later than usual. She wanted to think alone, and in her home, with all her life and the things which symbolized it about her:

She told Warren, at dinner, what had happened.

"Oh, Adair!" he said. "Yes, he was bound to turn up. How'd he look?"

"Older, just the same, though. I took him to the concert."

Warren looked at her.

"Good idea," he said. He still looked at her; something that he saw tightened the firm line of his mouth, narrowed his eyes a little.

"I don't know," she said thoughtfully. "It may have been foolish. I don't know. But you've got to try to be sure, haven't you? And that place and the music above all. You see, he and I—"

Warren waited. He couldn't help her.

"We didn't mean—either of us—I was sure the worst of seeing him was over. And then at the very end, the music—it did something to us. Warren, he still cares—he told me so."

"I knew he'd do that."

"Warren, dear, don't. You don't understand. It wasn't as you think. We couldn't help it. I—you see, he knew I cared, too. He couldn't help knowing that."

Warren got up.

"Mary, I want to understand. I want to help. I know this—it's hard all around. For him, too, I suppose. Do you mean you care for him as you did years ago? What do you want to do?"

"I don't know." Her voice rose; she looked at him with desperate, pleading eyes. "Warren, I don't know! I'm going to see him to-morrow—have lunch with him—so we can talk. I've got to find out."



"Yes. I've said I care for him, Warren. But I don't know how much."

"But look here. We're married," said Warren. "Married. You're my wife."

"And I love you," she said. "I've never been so sure of that. I love—us—you and me, together, and all we've got. But there's a part of me that loves him, too, and wants him, and can't bear the idea of letting him go again."

She looked at him, and she could see that he was hurt, and bewildered, and on the very verge of anger.

"You see, it was just this I was afraid of when you asked me to marry you. That he'd come back, and I'd still feel this way about him. It wasn't ever ended between us, whatever there was. It was just broken, and when you break a thing there are pieces left."

"But then you settled it!" Warren

shook his head doggedly. "That—that's final, isn't it?"

She was terribly afraid. He wasn't helping her. He—why, he was thinking of his rights; he was being possessive—Warren! Her finger touched her wedding ring, and she began slipping it up and down on her finger. All at once it was like those ancient fetters of which it was a symbol. Warren persisted:

"What's final, if marriage isn't?"

"Love," she said.

"I love you," said Warren, as one announcing a discovery. Her eyes softened.

"Warren, dear, we must get this straight," she said. "I—I hope you're going to understand. I could send him away. I could refuse ever to see him again, and keep on living with you,

because I'd married you. And I'd keep on remembering him, and wanting him, and I'd grow to hate you for robbing me of my chance to have him."

"No!" He cried out, as if she had hurt him.

"But, oh, I couldn't bear it!" she said. "I've got to be free—free to make my choice. And you—you must think of yourself, too. Don't you want to be sure I stayed with you because I loved you, and wanted to stay—not just because we'd gone through a ceremony together?"

He didn't answer her at once.

"Free?" he said finally. "I—I can't ever be free that way, Mary."

"I know," she said. "I ought—oh, never mind! I've been so happy, Warren. And still I suppose one's got to know. It's like a bill you must pay, in the end, no matter how long you put it off."

Warren walked up and down, troubled, confused, half angry, still. She looked at him, and beside him she saw a shadowy Adair, a figure curiously compounded of her memories and the living man who had come back into her life that afternoon. She saw them thus together, compared them, tried to weigh them. Warren turned upon her, suddenly.

"You're going to have lunch with him to-morrow? Mary, don't you know without seeing him? Can't you understand what wanting to see him means? You must care for him."

"Yes. I've said I did, Warren. But I don't know how much."

"But——" His anger flamed up. He crossed the room to her; took her hands in his. "No! You're my wife."

Then, in a moment, with a little sound of disgust, he dropped her hands.

"I suppose, if you forbid me——" she began.

"I don't! I'm not a Turk."

"Warren, Warren, dear! This isn't easy for me, either."

"Oh, I know it, Mary! I suppose I'm—why, I suppose I'm jealous! I never thought of being that. I've always hated the idea of it. I've despised people who were. But I seem to be like any other man."

The corners of her mouth turned up, ever so little, in what was not quite a smile.

"It's such a—such an infernal shock! You go along, and then it's like one of those squalls that comes up in summer."

"I know, Warren."

She had made stupid work of telling him, she thought. She had considered herself and her problem too much; him too little. Yet, after all, how else, she wondered, could she have done it?

It was done at any rate. She could begin to think again, now. She thought of trivial, inconsequential things; remembered the trouble with the plaster in the attic, and asked him if he had seen about it. And he answered her; thought, in his turn, of something that had been left to her. So it went on; they achieved, somehow, a complete detachment. Only when, while it was still early, she said she was going to bed, Warren had settled down with a law book; he meant to sit up late and work, he said. He went to the stairs with her; took her in his arms; kissed her, as he might have kissed his daughter.

"Old Mary," he said. "I'm sorry, dear."

She fell into a heavy, exhausted sleep after daylight had begun to worry its way through her window; Warren, standing beside her bed, roused her, and she sat up, contrite, ashamed. He had brought her toast and coffee.

"Oh, Warren!" she said. "Your breakfast——"

"Got it myself easy enough. Had a bad night, didn't you? Thought so. Try to take the coffee. Do you good."

The gruffness of his voice was a poor mask for the tenderness it tried to hide. She forced herself to drink

the coffee; tasted the toast. And he sat down on the side of her bed.

"Didn't sleep much myself," he said. "Did some thinking. Saw I'd been wrong. I didn't know it, but I've been thinking about you as a piece of property. That's all wrong. People do it, men and women both. But wives and husbands aren't property. Can't be. They belong to themselves. You had the idea last night: it's not marriage that's final, ever, it's love."

He was still for a moment.

"And about being free. You talked about that. Well, you're free, all right. And I don't mean just that I'd—well, be decent about a divorce, if you wanted it. That's of course. I mean you're as free as my thinking and believing you're free can make you. I—I love you. I've loved you ever since I first knew you. And I'm glad all this happened, because it's made me understand what that means—loving you."

She put out her hand to him, and he took it, and held it.

"During the night I remembered all sorts of things," he said. "Something you said once, about marrying you on your own terms. Well, I did. I didn't know just what that meant, I guess. But I know now, and if I had it to do over, and knew this was coming, I'd do it like a shot. And that's the way I want to keep you, too, if I can keep you."

His voice broke as he said that, and he got up, abruptly.

"That's about all. I must get that next train. It's going to be a busy day."

He bent down, kissed her; laughed, and shook his head at the door, when she called him back. She hadn't been able to answer him, hadn't been able to say a word. Now she wanted him to stay. But she was glad he was gone.

When Adair telephoned she told him what train she meant to take, and he met her at the station. He was all on fire; he had brought her a great bunch

of violets, and he laughed like a boy as she pinned them on. His mood had changed; he was triumphant now, as he had shown no sign of being the day before; the night had worked thus upon him.

For luncheon and their talk he took her to an old haunt of theirs, where the food was something more than good, and the tables were far apart, and there were no crowds. He was in his gayest mood; she remembered his old way of conquering depression in her by ignoring it. It wasn't until coffee was before them that he spoke of what was in their hearts.

"Oh, Mary!" he said. "I was such a cub—such a brute! That day you turned me off—I—why, I suppose I never believed you'd really do it."

"I called you back."

"I never heard! But that doesn't matter. I ought to have crawled to you on my hands and knees! But now—dearest—we knew, yesterday—we couldn't help it. What are we to do?"

She looked at him for a long time. He faced her; met her gaze steadily, with clear, blue eyes.

"You think I love you, Jack?"

"And don't you?"

"I wanted to know what you thought."

"You do!" he cried, triumph throbbing in his voice. "Mary, will he let you be free to marry me? Oh, Mary, I've loved you so! I've missed you so——"

She shook her head.

"Jack, if you were he, would you let me go free? If you knew I cared for some one else?"

"Never in this world! For I'd know you couldn't."

"But if I did?"

"I'd hold you close and make you love me again, as I loved you!"

"You'd hold me, because you loved me?"



"Why else? But, Mary, he can't love you as I'm loving you."

"I'm as free as he can make me," she said.

"Mary!" His hand leaped out to cover hers; closed upon it. She looked at their two hands, lying on the cloth; made no move to free her own.

"I'm going to stay, Jack, forever and ever. This is good-by."

"Mary!" He snatched his hand away; stared at her, aghast. "But you love me; you're mine; you belong to me——"

"I belong to myself. I'm free—freer than I've ever been in all my life!"

"You love me."

She looked at him, half impatiently, half pitifully.

"A little of me loves you, Jack. Just what's left of the girl you used to know. A little of me wants all that again—all

that we used to have and hope for. But I—I don't want it, Jack."

"You love me! I knew that yesterday."

He couldn't understand. An impulse of sheer anger shook her for a moment. And then, as she looked at him, pity came into her eyes. She couldn't make him understand, ever. He would always want to own her, or the woman who must take her place for him. She got up.

"I must go," she said breathlessly. "Jack, good-by."

She held out her hand to him.

"Mary, I can't say good-by like this!"

"I'm sorry. I must go—I must telephone——"

She left him ruthlessly. In the street she hurried on, until she saw the blue sign of a telephone station. In the booth, in a swift rush of words, she called Warren's number.



### IN AN OLD ORCHARD

THE brother of my soul was "Bill;" a fine old orchard climbed our hill;  
Red apples hung against the blue—the blueness of October skies.  
The shining grass waved dry and warm, and full of autumn's golden charm,  
And bending many a milkweed top were orange-tawny butterflies.

A while ago, with Isabel, I took the path we knew so well.

The sod was greening, and a tree dripped its pink petals dreamily.

I felt, but scarcely knew, these things—that sudden soft caress of Spring's,  
That rosy rain—while watching her for love that was and was to be.

I thought 'twas yesterday, but now I see about my playmate's brow

A hint of snowflakes, while the face beside me furrows, day by day.

But still when autumn grass waves deep, or April gusts through petals sweep,

A lad, a lover once again, I walk in that Elysian way.

JEANNIE PENDLETON HALL.

## MOOD

I WANT to lose the self I seem to be,  
And live with that strange self I cannot see.  
I want to go exploring in my mind  
And analyze the queer things I will find.  
I want to know myself stripped of the sham  
The world has made me use, and says I am.  
I want to stop this acting of a part;  
And yet I know, deep down within my heart,  
That I shall be afraid of what I see  
And hide my true self in the other me.

ADELE L. DE LEEUW.

## PLANS

I PLANNED the mornings we should have.  
They glittered like brocade  
That has a gold thread woven in.  
The afternoons I made  
Were generous as jewels are,  
Each with a different west.  
I liked the rose-flushed tourmaline,  
You liked the sapphire best.  
  
Strange that I never stopped to think  
Such days would dazzle you  
Who lived uncolored hours and choose  
The distance less than blue!  
I made the sundowns dim enough  
Even for you to share,  
But by the time I came to dusk  
I could not find you there.

GRACE HAZARD CONKLING.

## WHILE LOVE WAS YET BEFORE US

WHILE love was yet before us and your touch,  
That now is living fire, was just a hand  
Laid quietly in mine, I had not planned  
The wonder of to-day, nor dreamed that such  
Could come to us. I only thought to clutch  
A moment's faith, I only did demand  
One friend to trust, one heart to understand,  
Well knowing even this were asking much.  
  
And now your lips on mine have wakened dreams  
That leap and lure, we walk enchanted ways;  
Is it heart treason, then, if sometimes gleams  
For me the memory of those other days,  
Days lit with joy we had not waked to know,  
While love was yet before us, long ago?

HELEN FRAZEE-BOWER.

# The Artistic Temper

By Louis Weadock

ILLUSTRATED BY LUI TRUGO

A real story which may explain the reason for the "swell-headedness" of several otherwise shy and modest stars of the screen—no names mentioned, of course!

**M**AKE it the congratulations. I've got me a nice new star," beamed the plump little president of the Planet Film Corporation, relaxing his excited grip on his desk telephone. "He is so first-class he hung up on me without saying good-by."

Mr. Bloom, looking like a kewpie whose blood pressure is high, swung around in his swivel chair, his elation oozing from him as he contemplated the sable-clad back of his leading woman and the belted back of his director. Rose la Monde and Hector Howey were staring out of the window at a palm tree. They were as much interested in the palm tree as if in Hollywood, where the moving pictures come from, palm trees were not as conspicuous as real-estate signs and gasoline stations. It was plain that if Mr. Bloom insisted upon congratulations, he would have to furnish them himself.

"Your new star," said Miss la Monde, speaking to the palm tree, "is an unspeakable thing."

"Not only unspeakable, my dear, but nonspeakable also," said Hector Howey in a stage whisper. "The swellest head and the meanest man in pictures—mean enough to poison the well at a babies' picnic."

"Boys and girls," broke in Mr. Bloom in his most ingratiating tones, "don't let's fight. We got it on this lot a happy family. Let's keep it happy by treating Roderick Random much more better as he deserves. Anyway, he's the new star and he has the artistic temper."

"He'd better leave it in his dressing room, if I'm going to direct him," said the director as he dropped the girl's soft white hand and picked up his soft green hat. He and his admiring companion moved majestically to the door. There, the director posed himself for an effective exit, but before he made it he said:

"This is the lady who should be starred instead of that swell-headed Random. I wish I were president of this company."

Mr. Bloom looked at him sadly.

"Everybody that ain't president of this company wishes that he was," Mr. Bloom said with some bitterness. "I am the president and I wish I wasn't."

When they closed the door behind them, leaving Mr. Bloom, as they thought, properly crushed, he stuck out his tongue in the direction in which they had gone.

"Stuck-uppish leading ladies and bossy directors is the most terrible thing in this business except the censors," he muttered. "I'll tell mamma."

He told her at dinner, but he was not surprised when she did not seem to grasp the enormity of the situation.

"If this Random Roderick—" she began.

"Roderick Random," her husband murmured apologetically.

"The name is nothing," she said; "but if he is to be a sort of foreman like in the plant, it would be better he get along agreeable with the rest of the hands. It was that way in the factory."

"In the factory," her husband reminded her, "the people paid some attention to the boss. In this crazy moving pictures the boss is the last man anybody pays attention to. This young feller I hired to-day for one thousand dollars a week, he don't talk to nobody, not even to me. He's about the same age Mannie would be, if he lived; did I tell you?"

He thought he saw her lip quiver. He reached for her hand and petted it.

"Poor mamma," he said. "Soon I get you that property in Arverne."

"If you speak of Arverne, I cry," she said tremulously.

He preferred to have her think of Arverne than of Mannie.

"Soon I get you that property," he repeated. "This Random feller has the swellest head in the business, all right, but he has at the same time the swellest side profile in the business. Out of it I make enough money to buy you that place next the Greenebaums'."

"You are awful good to me, Abie," she told him.

"What should I do?" he demanded indignantly. "Should I beat you? In the first place I can't. You are too strong and my heart is too weak. I know you're lonesome out here away from the afternoon ladies' clubs."

"But, Abie, think," she said dreamily, "to sit on the front porch in a white dress and wait for you to come home on the five fifty-two."

"Soon as I sell the Random picture you have Arverne," he told her.

But he had to make it first.

Inside the camera lines Roderick Random was an artist. His specialty was the portrayal of gawky, gold-hearted youth, and into his noble farm hands he put so much appeal that almost everybody seeing a Random picture said: "Isn't he a nice boy?"

He was a nice boy—on the screen. Off the screen he was, as Mr. Bloom

himself regretfully admitted, "something else again." His arrogance was something awful and he carried a deadly weapon in a slow, sarcastic, soul-stabbing smile which was never seen on the screen, but which in real life made the most mild-mannered people long for a dark night and a dagger. The mild-mannered people were unjust to him. He never bothered them. He flew at higher game. About the potentates he uttered criticisms which were caught up and repeated by others in the hushed voices of those who speak of sacrilege. When he could not say anything unkind about them he said nothing. He was his own man and was mightily unpopular in consequence. For himself he had an affection amounting almost to worship.

When he signed his name to Mr. Bloom's contract, he turned to Mr. Bloom as if noticing for the first time that Mr. Bloom was present, and said carelessly:

"You are a fortunate man. You have just engaged the best actor in the United States."

Even that was a modest speech for him. Usually he referred to himself as "the best actor in the world."

And he knew all the tricks, as agreed the press agent and the still photographer who had been hovering about to preserve for posterity a picture of the important event of the signing of the contracts. The press agent had a child-like faith in the publicity value of photographs which showed people signing papers or shaking hands or exchanging presents, preferably flowers or loving cups. With no more ceremony than he would have used with a chair young Random thrust Mr. Bloom into the position which he desired, stood beside him, and told the photographer to go ahead. In telling about it afterward the press agent said:

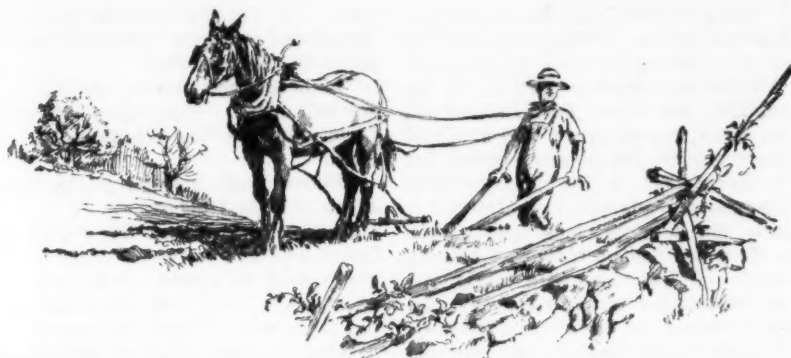
"Random worked the left-to-right on the old man. When that picture is

printed the caption will read: 'From left to right, Roderick Random, Abraham Bloom, Hector Howey, and so forth.' The reader will get an eyeful of Roderick Random, even if he isn't enough interested to see who is in Random's supporting company. My bones tell me that we're going to have some grief and woe with young Mr. Random."

His prophetic bones gave him an accurate forecast; the grief and woe appeared even before the making of

Bloom, who knew no authors and who, from all he had heard of them, was not anxious to know any, made Howey the keeper of his literary conscience.

Howey selected the story in which Roderick Random was to appear; Random had not yet attained among stars that pontifical position in which he might choose his own story. The director gave an author five hundred dollars for a title, another author three thousand dollars for a story to fit the title, another author two thousand dol-



His specialty was the portrayal of gawky, gold-hearted youth, and into his noble farm hands he put so much appeal that almost everybody seeing a Random picture said: "Isn't he a nice boy?"

the picture began. The first skirmish was fought over the selection of the story. Roderick Random had been on the lot less than a day before he discovered that, in matters of art, Mr. Bloom's thinking was done for him by Hector Howey. This had been so since the memorable occasion upon which Mr. Bloom, emerging from a perusal of "David Copperfield," to which he had been attracted by the name, instructed Howey to "write to this here Charley Dickens and get his price for a five-reeler." To Mr. Bloom the director had broken the news of the death of Dickens, adding, however, the consolatory information that he knew plenty of authors who were still alive. Mr.

lars to rewrite the work of his predecessor, and the final author two hundred and fifty dollars a week to put the story into continuity. He kept attentive eyes on the development of the script. When it was finished he had a first-rate story for a woman star. Each of the five reels wound up with a punch. Between punches the principal character was written so that Rose la Monde was given unlimited opportunities to look into fireplaces and out of windows, to play with children and with animals, and to suffer in silence, which was one of the best things that Rose la Monde did on the screen.

But as soon as Roderick Random saw the scenario and was told that it

was to be his starring vehicle, he did some suffering of his own. It was not done in silence.

He hammered upon Mr. Bloom's desk and yelled into Mr. Bloom's ears, bringing his scene to a close, not with a spoken title but with a piece of action. He tore to bits his copy of the scenario and flung the tatters all over Mr. Bloom. The little president thrilled with admiration.

"Look! I told you so," he cried. "Random has got it, the artistic temper: Let him play what he likes."

What Random liked was a story by a friend of his. It cost more than the story by Howey's friends, but he got it.

In the meantime, as they say in the subtitles, the Planet Film Corporation was becoming top-heavy with overhead charges. Mr. Bloom was worried, but he knew that in the moving-picture business anybody who looks worried is lost. So he went along with a light smile which had no roots in his heavy heart. He lied to his wife, to his lawyer, and to his doctor. Anybody who lies to any of the three is in a bad way. Mr. Bloom lied to them all. He told his wife that he would soon be able to buy her that terrestrial paradise in Arverne. He told his lawyer that relatives in New York had offered him ample financial help. He told his doctor that not for a long time had he seen in front of his eyes those black spots. To himself he had kept the fearful knowledge that he had dreamed of black water, which, as everybody knows, is the worst possible thing that anybody can dream of. That he should have dreamed this terrible dream at daybreak added immeasurable terrors to what was bad enough already. For the morning upon which he dreamed it was the morning of the day upon which the photographing of the picture was to begin.

At the breakfast table his wife said to him:

"Abie, you look like you saw a ghost. If I didn't been married to you for twenty-eight years, I would think you had a conscience."

"Stuff and fiddlesticks," he retorted. "It's only insomnia. I got it so bad I can't sleep."

He stooped for his after-breakfast kiss and playfully pulled her ear, his favorite expression of affection.

"Give some cheers," he said gayly.

"To who should I give cheers?" she wanted to know.

"Not 'to who;' 'for who.' For yourself. You get that Arverne property sooner as you expect. We start shooting at the fillum to-day."

"If there is shooting, be careful," she warned him. "You know, Doctor Stein said you had enlarging of the heart."

"Doctor Stein has got it enlarging of the bill," he laughed.

As he drove around the corner he looked back and waved his pudgy hand. She waved in return. Not once in twenty-eight years had they neglected this ceremonial. It was this warmth of personal interest which he missed at the studio. There his employees would have waved their hands at the adding machine or the safe sooner than at little Mr. Bloom.

Roderick Random, in overalls and with his face made up, threw him a curt greeting. Mr. Bloom would have liked to ask why the company was not already at work, but he was not sure whether it was ethical to question even a star about the shooting schedule of a director. He would have liked to know why, upon such a glorious day, they were going to work in the studio instead of upon location. He had yet to learn that upon fine days bursting with sunshine it is better to work indoors, in order that when the bad weather comes the company can loaf indoors waiting for the skies to clear. There were many things that Mr.



Bloom would have liked to know, but he was an outsider and the moving-picture business could not be expected to reveal all its secrets to him at once.

As he sat at his desk opening his morning bills he reflected that if he and his new star were in any other business, they would be friendly. Mr. Bloom was a friendly little man. He liked everybody and was pleased when others liked him. He had gone out of his way to pay little attentions to Random, but against the cool insolence of that young man he had made no headway. Still, on the screen, but only upon the screen, his new star made him think of his lost Mannie. He would have preferred even a grudging word from Random to the effusiveness with which Howey and Miss la Monde treated him, especially when they wanted something. He decided that Random disliked him because Random thought him to be a wealthy man. Only Mr. Bloom knew how far from true this estimate of him was. Yet he had heard from Howey, who was not above carrying tales, that Random's favorite sentiment was "Money does not care who has it." And he himself had overheard Random tell one of the stage hands, with whom, as with the extra people and the minor actors, the new star was very popular, to read what Samuel Butler had written about money and the persons who have it. Mr. Bloom had looked up Samuel Butler in the "Moving Picture Directory," but, finding that he was not included among those contemporary immortals, had put him down as one of Random's newspaper friends.

As he looked through his mail this morning, he half wished that Random could know just how close the Planet Film Corporation was to the bankruptcy court. He thought that Random would like him better. Well, he thought, Hector Howey and Rose la Monde liked him. That was some-

thing. Now he was to learn how much. They came in together. In their manner was a certain constraint which gave Mr. Bloom a vague foreboding of impending evil. Mr. Bloom's premonition came true. He wondered whether it was his first installment of the bad luck which had been presaged by the dream of black water.

"We would like to have you sign an agreement to star Miss la Monde in your next picture," said the director, wasting no preliminaries.

"The next picture?" gasped Mr. Bloom. "Why, that's the picture we start to-day. That is, I hope we start it to-day."

His feeble attempt at sarcasm fell dead.

"We don't mean this one," said Howey sharply. "We meant the one after this. Of course, we'll both do our best to make this picture a success, but we want to do it with the written assurance that Miss la Monde will star in the next."

"Why written?" asked Mr. Bloom. "Miss la Monde has a contract, but between you and me there ain't a piece of paper."

"I trust you absolutely," interrupted the director; "but Miss la Monde has received so many flattering offers lately that she feels that she can't afford to go on playing leads for Random when she should be starring."

The young woman in the sable coat nodded agreement. Mr. Bloom studied the carpet, realizing that this, too, was a bad sign; most of his courageous inspirations had come to him when he had nerve enough to look at the ceiling.

"It's funny you should come to me at the last minute," he said slowly. "Some people might call it a stuck up."

"Sir!" flared Miss la Monde.

"Easy, Rose," advised the director. "Mr. Bloom is making up his mind. You'll write out the agreement for us, won't you, Mr. Bloom?"

"I've got thousands of dollars tied up in this pitcher already," said Mr. Bloom. "I suppose I'll have to. Come in at noon. Now if you will please be so good, I wish you would leave me be."

This was as close as he dared come to ordering them to go to work.

"Fine," said the director. "We'll make you a picture that will show this one up. We take our business seriously. That's more than I say for somebody, mentioning no names, who calls the pictures 'the jumping snap-shots.'"

"Anyway, Random works," said Mr. Bloom, hoping that he would not become excited; "and I do hope we get something before the sun goes down."

"We start in a few minutes," said the director. "Come on, Rose."

It was only when they had gone that Mr. Bloom remembered that Miss la Monde had forgotten to thank him for having promised to make her a star.

In a moving-picture studio "a few minutes" is a singularly elastic period of time; still it was not more than half an hour later that the director and the leading woman were on the set ready for work. After their arrival there were only a few trifling delays. It took half an hour to get the lights properly adjusted. When they were ready, the camera man discovered that he could not thread up without film. The film was brought in less than twenty minutes. Then nothing remained to be done except to find and restore to the set a kitchen chair which had mysteriously disappeared. After everybody had looked all over the lot for it, it was found under a stage hand on the next set. By that time Miss la Monde's complexion needed repair. She and the director had settled the important question of whether she should have worn her sable coat to the studio on such a warm day. Miss la Monde,

representing the affirmative side of this debate, won after ten minutes. She maintained that, in halcyon Hollywood, the temperature goes down with the sun and that it is the part of wisdom to dress in the morning for weather which may be encountered at night. By the time the leading woman and the director had come out of conference, the lights were all wrong again, but at last everything was shipshape and in readiness for the rehearsal of the first scene.

Miss la Monde got out of her sable coat. She handed it to her maid and stepped forth a fetching picture in riding clothes. It was because she looked so well in riding clothes that the scenario called for her to appear in them in the parlor of the star's lightly furnished but heavily mortgaged home. Later they would take the exterior, where she would be thrown from her horse. Howey always managed to get plenty of horses into his pictures. He was a silent partner in a livery stable, and the mounts came from his establishment. But now there was no horse to divert attention from the scene in which only the star and the leading woman were to appear.

The scene was to be played in a parlor set so expensive that when he learned the cost, Mr. Bloom had said fervently that he hoped they would not find it necessary to build more than one room in the house. Random, in the overalls which typify manly worth the world over, was to be discovered inventing. It was made plain in an introductory title that he was a tenant on the estate of the leading woman's father, but what he was inventing was not made so clear. The invention stood in the parlor, but an unprejudiced observer would have been divided in opinion as to whether it was a printing press or a patent washing machine.

But in the eyes of the director neither the object of the star's inventive genius nor the star himself were of as much



Mr. Bloom laughed. It was a weak little laugh, but they were all glad to hear it. "I make it the excuse," he said shame-facedly. "My blood pumper ain't much good."

importance to that set as a practical door in the middle of the rear wall. It was with the assistance of that door that the director counted on Miss la Monde's stealing the picture from the star at the jump. Give Rose la Monde a door, and she asked no odds of any leading woman in the business. She could pound a door with such emotion, such feeling, such tempo that audiences were moved to tears. Sometimes they wondered whether her heart or the door would break first.

In executive session she and the director had agreed that if she could start the picture with a bang, as it were, she might be able to steal it. Somebody who had their interests at heart should have told her and the director that a lens hog like Random might have something to say about a picture being stolen from under his eyes.

Tolerantly the star had regarded all the false starts which had been made

in getting the picture as far as it had gone. If the director wasted time and money, that was the director's business and Bloom's; it was none of his business, and he made it none. Only if he himself was affected would he say anything. He did not have to wait long for that time to come. Howey called him, with a show of deference, and, with a show of answering deference, he came forward, leaving the extra people with whom he had been chatting.

Random and Howey knew that their hour had struck, that the time of their mental grapple had come. Upon the events of the next few minutes hinged the question of authority, the determination as to how the picture was to be played. As an evidence of sweet reasonableness Howey laid aside his megaphone. Without his megaphone a director does not *feel* fully dressed. But he did not take off his puttees. He

was still a director, a suave, obliging director, but still a director.

"Miss la Monde will try to engage your attention as soon as she enters," he said. "You know, she has just fallen from her horse and lost consciousness. When she recovers and sees you, she registers dismay, then she tries to engage you in conversation. You——"

He hesitated.

"Yes?" murmured the star.

Howey took the plunge.

"You will be too much interested in your invention to look up."

The star's eyes hardened, but he did not speak. These were directions to be given to a leading man, but to a star, never. Nevertheless, this star stood staring at the director, letting him play his string out.

"When she sees that you pay no attention to her," continued Howey, "she will lose control of herself and——"

"Pounds the door?" yelled Random. "She will like hell. If you want to give her this scene outright, why don't you hand her an ax and let her smash the furniture? That ought to be punch enough. She'll pound no door in any picture that I'm in."

He was panting with rage.

"So she'll lose control of herself, will she? She's already lost control of one of your livery nags. She's lost me a mile of film making a grand-stand entrance. It seems to me there's a lot of losing going on around here. Well, there's going to be some more. You're going to lose your chance of starring her in my picture."

A clash like this could never stop there. They all rushed in upon Mr. Bloom. Miss la Monde was a bad third, but then she had to stop to take her sable coat from her maid.

For more than half an hour Mr. Bloom had been hunched over his desk, his tongue between his teeth, writing

laboriously in his own hand a private and confidential letter to New York. The letter had to do with the pledging of his life-insurance policies as security for a loan. The failure to obtain this loan would put the Planet Film Corporation high and dry on the rocks. He was not a fluent writer, but in this instance he had preferred to endure the hardships of composition rather than intrust to his stenographer the story of his precarious financial condition. Never since the time he had made out his income-tax return had he found it so difficult to tell the truth about himself without giving himself either the worst or the best of the story.

With panic in his eyes he looked up from his writing to confront the invaders. They all talked at once. He agreed with everybody.

To emphasize a point, Rose la Monde moved toward the closed door.

"Don't pound it," begged Mr. Bloom; "the varnish ain't dry."

"I've got too many offers waiting for me to have to stand for being insulted," she flamed. "I warn you there's a two-weeks' notice in my contract."

"There's none in mine," cried the loyal Howey. "I can quit now."

"Go ahead and quit," yelled Random. "I'll direct the picture."

"I won't quit," thundered Howey.

"You won't direct me," snapped the star.

"And you won't direct me," said Miss la Monde to Random.

Mr. Bloom raised his arms in entreaty.

"Children——" he began.

That was as far as he got. A look of surprise, then of agony contorted his face. His pudgy little hand fumbled for his heart.

"Mamma," he gasped, and crumpled upon his desk, face down.

Anybody who knows anything about actors knows what Random and Howey

and Rose la Monde did. A moment before they had been at one another's throats. To see them at work over the unconscious Mr. Bloom, one would have thought that all their lives they had been the closest of friends among whom no cross word had ever passed. Random was the first to reach him.

"He ought to be on his back, 'Hec'," he said to the director, giving him his nickname for the first time.

"I'll help you lift him, 'Roddy,'" said Hec.

Together they placed Mr. Bloom gently upon the floor.

"Put his head on my coat, boys," said Rose la Monde.

She wriggled out of that garment of garments and tossed it upon the floor as carelessly as if it had been an old rug. Howey pieced out the improvised pillow with his green hat.

"I'll get some whisky," he suggested.

When he came back with a pint flask, he found Rose la Monde rubbing one of Mr. Bloom's wrists and Random rubbing the other.

"Got the grog at the crap game in the prop room," he explained. "Got it from Clancy. He said he voted for the eighteenth amendment, but that he was ag'in its enforcement."

A fiery swallow was poured down Mr. Bloom's throat. He spluttered and blinked and was himself.

"Don't let any of that stuff get on the floor," said Rose la Monde. "It'll burn off the varnish."

Mr. Bloom laughed. It was a weak little laugh, but they were all glad to hear it.

"I make it the excuse," he said shamefacedly. "My blood pumper ain't much good."

He tried to get to his feet. The men helped him into his chair. He gripped the arms so hard that his pudgy little hands showed white at the knuckles.

"Now, if you please, ladies and gentlemen," he said, "we will go on with the meeting."

Miss la Monde put her arm around his neck.

"You are not strong enough to talk business now," she said coaxingly. "I'll put you in my car and send you home."

"The limousine is too stuffy," said Howey. "Take my open car. But hadn't I better telephone for your doctor first?"

"Doctors is the one thing I don't believe in," said Mr. Bloom stoutly. "I would be many times obliged if we would finish this business. I'll be fair, boys and girls. I promise you that. Now let me know about it again."

The director and the leading woman looked at the star. It was his move. He moved. It was not so much what he said, but the way in which he said it that surprised them all. For when he spoke he was the Roderick Random of the screen, the kind-hearted, unassuming boy of the screen, not the arrogant egotist they had seen in real life.

"I'm sorry that I lost my temper," he said; "I apologize. I would like to go back to work and I will do whatever I'm told to do."

They all looked at him in amazement. Then Howey spoke.

"You'll find me an easy boss," he said.

"We're wasting time," said Rose la Monde. "Let's get back to work."

At the door Mr. Bloom called to them.

"Boys and girls," he said, rising with difficulty to his feet, "from the bottom of my heart I thank you. Miss Rose, if you'll wait a minute I'll give you that agreement signed."

"To hell with the agreement," said Miss Rose.

When, after a good day's work well

done, Roderick Random, the last actor to leave the studio, stopped to tap upon Mr. Bloom's door, it was a resonant voice which bade him enter.

"Mr. Roderick Random," said Mr. Bloom accusingly, "you are one first-class young feller, but also you are a Doctor Hyde and Mr. Jessell."

"As bad as that?"

"Worse. Where is all your stuck-uppishness went to?"

The young man grinned.

"Where is it went to?" insisted Mr. Bloom. "Right here in this office this morning and right here in this office right now, you are like you are in the jumping tintypes."

"Jumping snapshots," corrected the other.

"Jumping whatever they are," said Mr. Bloom. "You are so much nicer like this. You remind me of Mannie and mamma, too. On the pitchers you remind her of Mannie. He was a good boy, my Mannie."

"His father is a good man," said Random simply.

"He could be whole lots better," said Mr. Bloom. "He ain't such a John D. Napoleon of finance as his press agent says he is. It was better news to me than you think that you are all working together so nice now, like a happy family."

"You'll get the best we've got," Random assured him lightly. "Remember I told you that you had engaged the best actor in the world?"

There was a tinge of regret in Bloom's voice as he answered:

"You said it only in the United States."

"I was too modest," smiled Random. "I tell you again, I am the best actor in the world."

Mr. Bloom was plainly puzzled.

This boastfulness seemed alien to the boy who stood before him.

"Do you know why?" asked the boy. "Because until this morning I was acting every minute that I was not before the camera. I want to tell you that it takes a darn good actor to do the acting I've been doing off the set."

"And on the set, too," said the bewildered Mr. Bloom.

"On the set," said Random. "I don't act a lick. When I play those rube kids, I play myself. It's dead easy. What was hard was playing the swell-headed pup I was in real life."

"But why?"

"I thought that I needed a bluff to carry me through. I saw others pulling it so I pulled it and went it one better and, all the time, inside of me I was just as shy as I am on the screen. But I didn't come in to talk about myself. I stopped to tell you that if it will be any accommodation to you, you can let my salary ride for a few weeks. And another thing, if you need a few thousand to help you out of a tight place I've got it and it's yours."

Mr. Bloom blew his nose; this operation gave him a legitimate excuse to rub his eyes.

"Who told you?" he asked.

"I couldn't help seeing that letter on your desk," said Random. Believe it or not, he blushed.

Mr. Bloom put his short arm as far as it would go around the boy's shoulders.

"I got it fixed so I don't need a nickel," he said joyously; "but I should like you to do me a favor."

"Name it."

"I should like," said Mr. Bloom shyly, "that you should come to dinner with me and meet mamma."

"Get your hat," said his star.





# The Hope That Failed

By Garrard Harris

ILLUSTRATED BY H. T. DENISON

When the wife of Major Bolivar Anderson hitched her social ambition to a Cause, and for that Cause chose Prohibition Enforcement, something funny, if not disastrous, was bound to happen.

WERE going to move to town," calmly announced Mrs. Bolivar Anderson as echo to the statement from her husband that he had sold the cotton crop for sixty-two thousand dollars.

Two years of abnormal prices for the cotton made on Runnemedede Plantation had placed a whaling sum to the credit of Major Bolivar Anderson, and had bred in the bosom of his wife a violent discontent with life amid rural surroundings.

"Oh, here now, Betty, that won't do— Why, thunderation, I can't stand it in town!"

"You've got to stand it. I've stood it out here on this forsaken plantation for nearly thirty years, and turn about is no more than fair."

"What's the idea?"

"We are going to buy the old Wilkinson place in Hillsboro, and fix it up and entertain, and go in for something besides the price of cotton, hog cholera, and news about the Hereford cattle. It's my turn now!"

The major knew it was useless to argue. He fled, and broke the news to Jim, friend and associate ever since Jim, as a wall-eyed little pickaninny, was presented to the small, tow-headed Bolivar by old Judge Anderson a year before the Civil War. The major was not a veteran; he had been given the title because all the quality folks had a right to a title, and he looked like a major.

"Good Lawd, Marse Bolly. What us gwine do in dat town? Jes' stay dressed up an' onhappy?" queried Jim.

"Oh, dern it, don't ask me! It means the end of our fishing and hunting."

The major sighed. Fishing and hunting and camping out down on Lost River was the chief aim in life for the two.

"Is the missis plumb sot on dis yer idee?"

"Sotter'n all hell."

"Well, dat do settle hit. We might's well go to packin' up."

The little, wiry, snapping-eyed Betty Anderson lost no time buying the Wilkinson place, one of the notable old homes of Hillsboro. Its spacious grounds were tangled with overgrown boxwood hedges, sprawling magnolia and forsythia and bridal wreath. The house needed paint—needed everything. Its last occupant, an old bachelor and recluse, had inherited it from his widowed brother.

Carpenters, painters, and decorators swarmed, and the place began to shine in pristine glory. A gang of hands restored order to the wonderful old rose garden and generally made things painfully neat.

Before the major realized what was happening to him he was transplanted, to spend his time in aimless wanderings, much as a caged lion paces incessantly the narrow confines of his prison. It was a most doleful period.

On the other hand, Mrs. Bolivar Anderson was exulting in her new orbit and a continuous performance with dressmakers and dry-goods clerks and milliners. She was no climber, no mere nouveau riche. Her folks were the Scotts, and entitled to a place above the salt. But there had been many long, hard, lean years out on Runnemedede, when cotton was down to four and six cents a pound. Now, selling at forty, it was the real Golden Fleece, and the family coffers bulged.

All of the town had called at the new home of the Andersons', and Mrs. Betty was enjoying herself hugely. Closer contact with the situation, however, showed no particular field in which she could assume the leadership and prominence she craved.

One purple, hazy spring day the major sat under the wistaria pergola, which had replaced the old summer-house on the lawn. Panicles of blossoms hung in amazing profusion, their fragrance an Oriental incense to the season. Myriads of bumblebees zoned and scrambled among the blossoms. A mocking bird caroled from a tree near by, and a scarlet cardinal piped hauntingly from his throne on a rose spray.

Jim came in and sat down. Directly the major, chin on bosom, sighed and reexamined a quill he had fashioned from a goose feather for his fishing line.

"I know what yo' thinkin' 'bout. You got yo' mind on Los' River."

"Shut up! Don't make it any worse!"

"I bet dem big ole blue-gill perches is hongry, an' a wonderin' what's become of us."

"Oh, hush, Jim! This life is about to finish me."

Betty sauntered in, restless and somewhat lonely. She missed the routine of activity on the plantation. Responsibilities she once had thought burdens, now in retrospect, were joys.

"Bolivar, I'm going in for prohibition," she said.

"You always were strong for it. Every time I took a toddy I got a lecture."

"But I mean I'm going to take the lead here on it."

"What's the use? We *have* prohibition; it's no issue any longer."

"Oh, well, I'm looking for a vehicle. I'd as soon have it missions or social work or club work, but those are all taken. I'll revive the prohibition-enforcement idea."

"Why?"

"I need something to do."

"Better go back to the plantation." The major's voice was vibrant with a sudden hope.

"By no means. I merely haven't got started."

"Well, I don't suppose you can make it any dryer than it is. Last drink I had offered me was a choice of vanilla extract or Doctor Whoopem's Bitters."

"I will invite Everleigh Pearson down here, have him lecture, and form the Educational Prohibition Enforcement League. It will be my league. I will run it."

There was finality in her tones. The major sighed. Escape was farther away than ever.

"That old fraud will cost you a lot of money; he charges like thunder for his lectures."

"Well, we can stand the expense," replied Betty with calm optimism.

"But it is so useless."

"Perhaps, from your standpoint. I'll have a luncheon, then the lecture, and formation of the league in the afternoon at the opera house, and a lawn fête in the evening as a sort of celebration. I'm going to show these people a few things."

The major knew she would do just that and more.

She proceeded toward the house to write the silver-tongued apostle of ab-



Fishing and hunting and camping out down on Lost River was the chief aim in life for the two.

solite aridity, and begin arrangements. Bolivar Anderson looked after her and sighed again.

"Jim, ain't women the devil?" he inquired plaintively. "The very devil? Now, just as soon as I get able to buy her a five-thousand-dollar Hereford bull, and build her a new barn, and get a fine tractor for her, and rebuild the cotton gin, and get a registered Tamworth boar for her, here she comes and moves to town and takes up with this infernal society foolishness. And prohibition!" He snorted in disdain.

"Marse Bolly, you reckon if anything wuz ter go wrong wid dis yer speechifyin' foolishment, she'd git mad an' quit an' go back home?"

"She's powerful high strung, Jim, as you know. If she slipped up and made a flat of it, I don't think she could stand

to stay here. Yes, I reckon she pull up and leave right off."

"Well, den, s'pose we figgers on greasin' de path a little so's to help dat slip-up?"

"Jim, if you wasn't a nigger, I believe you'd have been a great general."

"Yasser, I specks so, too. Hit's our only chanst of gittin' back home. Me—I'm jes' about as comfortable as a cockroach in a hot fryin' pan!"

Quite the sensation of the season was the announcement that Mrs. Bolivar Anderson was going to bring, at her own expense, the renowned Everleigh Pearson to Hillsboro, to lecture for the league, and otherwise rattle and harass the buried bones of old John Barleycorn. The attendant social events were to be a notable contribution to the season's gayety.

Three days before the lecture date Betty discovered a second cellar door concealed by a pile of debris. She needed the additional space of which it gave promise, to store the summer preserving, so requested Bolivar to have the room cleaned out and whitewashed. Being in dire need of occupation, he gratefully took the job.

"Hey, what dis?" called one of the laborers, pulling out rotten planks and decrepit blinds leaning in a corner.

His lantern disclosed an old-fashioned stoneware churn of some five gallons capacity. It was covered with the dust of ages, and almost wholly concealed beneath old rags, shoes, discarded rat traps, and magazines of a generation gone. The top had been fastened tightly with sealing wax, the dasher hole plugged with wood, and over the entire top an inch layer of paraffin.

"Roll it out here!" commanded the major.

In the better light, Jim assisted in the investigation. They dug with their pocketknives, and finally pried the top off. A fragrance such as Araby, the Blest, could never furnish, floated up and entranced and enthralled.

"Brandy peaches!" whispered Bolivar Anderson in awed delight. "And goodness only knows how long they have been here. Run get a cup from the kitchen quick—quick!"

The major tested the thick, golden fluid surrounding the peaches, and that peace and happiness which passeth understanding settled upon his countenance.

"Brandy, real brandy; here, get you some, Jim! Fine peach brandy to start with, and kicks like a government mule! Luck, well I should say so!" He was gnawing one of the saturated peaches.

"We better git dis outen here. The missis liable to come along an' den—bang! We has no more brandy peaches ner de brandy dey been soakin' in!"

"Take it and hide it in the closet in your room, Jim! Wrap this old quilt round it. If you drop it, there'll be a dead African around here!"

"Yasser, I jes' as soon be daid as to miss hit mer own se'f."

Mrs. Betty Anderson cast a number of suspicious glances at the major during dinner; he was so blithe and gay and debonaïr, so much like his own self after a good day down on Lost River, that she was puzzled. Such bubbling humor after weeks of gloom was curious, to say the least.

And there was a faint odor floating about. She sniffed until he suggested she do something for her cold. She could not identify it. That aroma was not mere whisky; she was sure of that. Not being certain of her ground, she was wise enough not to prefer charges.

"Jim, that's the sneakingest, strongest liquor I ever tasted!" jubilantly confided the major later on. "Slips down as smooth and sweet as some magic oil of joy, no burn nor rank taste and you think there is nothing much to it. But when it hits bottom and explodes, it's like one of those depth charges the navy used."

"Hit sholy has de 'thority an' smells more like some of the missis' puffume dan lick: en hit don't *taste* like lick, neither!"

The major went with his wife to the train to meet the noted Everleigh Pearson, and fairly outdid himself with courtesy and solicitude.

"Aren't you working, rather overdoing it, too hard?" inquired Bolivar with tender interest. "Last time I was privileged to see and hear you, you looked infinitely stronger than now. I'm afraid your health is not good?" he ventured as they entered the automobile.

He had hit upon the one matter of paramount interest to the orator. Publicly, and in his two-hundred-and-fifty-dollar-a-night lectures, he claimed pro-

hibition as his one grand passion. That was for public consumption. The real thing was his health, and his appetite. Much of a glutton and unable to resist gustatory appeals, Pearson and his digestion were in constant battle, and he was a confirmed hypochondriac.

He paled. He had eaten a large steak smothered in onions for breakfast, and much orange marmalade and stacks of toast and two cups of coffee and a grapefruit. The breakfast was even then raising a disturbance.

"Why, I do not feel well. I never feel well. I am rather weak, and easily fatigued, and I fear I am overtaxing my strength in this crusade."

"I know it, suh, I know it. You show the effects. Better go easy. Why, I saw you two years ago and I am shocked, positively shocked, suh, at the change for the worse. I beg of you to take care of yourself; you are slipping, suh, slipping fast!"

Everleigh Pearson trembled. No one had had the temerity to tell him such startling facts, and this genial gentleman was a true friend to warn him.

"I—I do not feel very well. I think I will lie down until time for the lecture this afternoon." There was a slight quaver in his voice.

Mrs. Betty, who had been vainly kicking the major's shin and nudging him to stop his disheartening talk, grasped the chance to take hold of the conversation.

"You are going to stay with us, you know, and I will see that you are kept absolutely quiet; there will be no one on your floor. I will make your excuses to the luncheon guests."

Better than have him cancel the whole engagement in a panic!

"I will not partake of refreshment at all until after I have spoken. I am so high strung, so devoted to my cause, that food disagrees with me if I eat before appearing on the platform."

Everleigh Pearson believed all that and more. Raised a sort of *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, never associating with the common herd, being sent to exclusive private schools, and dominated by three sisters and his mother, Pearson grew up knowing little about life in its real aspects. He had never taken a drink; he had never been exposed to the temptation in his formative days. He imagined it tasted like a combination of carbolic acid and aqua fortis. In college his associates were much of his type—ribald majorities of other students called them the "Sewing Society." Everleigh emerged into law, then into a professorship, then into a Chautauqua lecturer with prohibition as his one great topic.

Silence reigned on the upper floor of the Anderson mansion. Mrs. Betty went up at lunch time to inquire if the guest would have anything, but he declined even a glass of cream and a cracker.

The lecture was to be at three o'clock. At two, Jim tapped on the door. He bore a dainty waiter, with immaculate napery, a spray of roses, and a tall, thin glass, frosty on the outside, and apparently containing a very thick yellow cream. Jim had eased up the back stairs.

"Jedge, Marse Bolivar say you better take dis to kinder stren'then you. It's a homemade cordial his ma used to make an' he always took when he was feelin' porely. He takes hit in cream, jes' like dis. He say hit will make you feel lots better."

Everleigh Pearson was ravenous, and that glass of cream came like a benediction, even if it did have some medicine in it. He fairly grabbed the glass.

"Boss tole me to wait an' see ef you could down hit," continued Jim solicitously. "He says take dis dose, den lie down an' nap a little, an' ernother in half hour, an' you'll be able to make a fine talk."

Everleigh tasted, sipped, and gulped.

"Of what is this magic brew composed?" he asked in his best Shakespearian voice.

"Lawsy, I dunno what all Ole Miss used ter put in hit—wile-cherry bark, an' poke root, an' peach stones pounded up, an' witch-hazel bark, an' snake root, an' tansy, an' lots er things. Hit's a powerful fine medicine; a bar'l of hit wouldn't hurt nobody."

The orator placed the empty glass on the waiter and nodded approval.

"I think I begin to feel better already. It is really very palatable, to be such a mixture. Thank the major for me, and tell him I shall be delighted to follow his directions."

Pearson smiled graciously and gave Jim a half dollar. Something like springtime was stirring around the cockles of his heart and gloom clouds were scudding away.

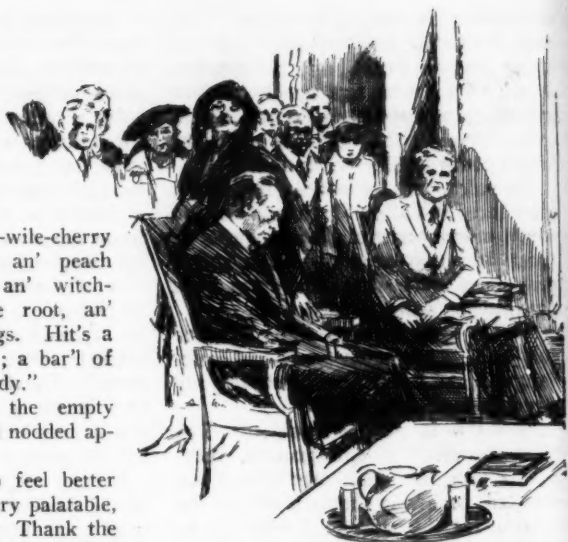
Fifteen minutes later Mrs. Betty tapped on the door to say that she must go on to the opera house, but the major would bring the orator down in the machine: There was no answer.

She gently pushed the door open, and saw the distinguished guest, fully clothed, flat on his back on the bed, snoring prodigiously.

"It is a pity to wake him, he so needs the rest," she said to herself, withdrawing and hastening down to issue instructions to have Pearson at the stage door at the right moment.

At two-thirty Jim waked the guest and proffered another glassful. Pearson drank it without batting an eye.

"That's the best medicine I ever took. Why, I feel like a new man already!" he chattered.



In that deathlike silence the high priest of prohibition enforcement emitted a clear, sonorous, and drawn-out snore.

"Yasser, hit sholy is. Take ernother little nap, an' me an' Marse Bolly will see you gits dar in time to speechify."

Enveloped in a comfort and happiness he did not know existed upon this earth, Everleigh Pearson turned over to a golden, hazy doze. Little birds sat upon the footboard of the bed and caroled. The perfume of myriad flowers hung about. Seductive dance music rang in his ears, he was gently beating time with one hand and foot. He wondered if he would ever again see that voluptuous young widow who was so interested in him over at Montgomery.

It seemed but a minute before the faithful, helpful Jim was back again. Of course there were magicians and genii—was not this one of those magic potions of the fairy stories? Pearson took the dose and insisted upon Jim accepting five dollars. By himself, he cut a few dance steps he had not practiced since before he became addicted





to much custard pie and many chocolate éclairs daily, and had taken on far too much weight. What a day, what a day; how much music there was in the atmosphere, how golden the sunlight, how happy and sweet and right the world!

The opera house was filled with the elect of Hillsboro. The event was more than a mere lecture, it was a social occasion of the first magnitude. A chorus was sung by the massed choirs of three churches. Judge Worthington Hamby, presiding as chairman, was making some preliminary remarks preparatory to the eulogy of Everleigh Pearson, which would introduce the orator of the occasion.

Right on the minute the distinguished guest entered the stage door upon the arm of Major Bolivar Anderson, who towed him to the edge of the stage, and started him through the wings to his chair.

As Pearson waddled out to the seat there were some who would have sworn that there was a slight, a very slight, lurch in his gait. He sat heavily, so much so that an audible grunt escaped his lips. He straightened up and glared severely toward the footlights, which caused him to blink with owlish gravity. The great speaker kept moistening his lips, and caressing his chin aimlessly with one hand. His face, and particularly the prominent and pudgy nose, was extremely flushed.

Judge Hamby's voice was monotonous with that droning, sleep-compelling quality possessed by an electric fan on a hot summer afternoon. Everleigh Pearson blinked, half nodded, and recovered. Again, but a less decided victory. Once more the forces of Morpheus returned to the attack—and won.

A titter and a sibilant whisper started; the titter grew to a guffaw from the audience.

Judge Hamby paused, nonplused, and looked toward the seat behind him just as he said he had the privilege of introducing the high priest of prohibition enforcement.

In that deathlike silence the high priest emitted a clear, sonorous, and drawn-out snore.

Aghast, Mrs. Bolivar Anderson rushed forward and shook the speaker by the shoulder.

"Speak, speak, rise, and speak!" she hissed.

"Wazzer matt'r?" demanded Everleigh, truculently returning to consciousness.

"Get up and speak to the audience!"

He rose, gently tacked over to the speaker's table, and, noting the pitcher of ice water, poured a glass, running it copiously over on table and floor.

He gulped it at one motion. Another, and the crowd grew hilarious.

"Goo' old ice water!" announced Everleigh, winking gravely at the audience, and as he poured another glass, the enthusiasm grew tumultuous.

"Speak! Speak!" urged some devoted ones, mystified by his actions, and thinking it a prelude to the address.

"Ain't goin' to speak!" asserted the high priest, wrestling vainly with a hiccup which finally detonated like the backfire of a three-ton truck. "Don' feel like speakin', rather dance. Go home, don't bother me!"

He turned his back on them and waddled gravely off the stage.

Mrs. Bolivar Anderson rushed to Judge Hamby and whispered to him. He held up his hand to quell the hysterical uproar out in front.

"The distinguished orator of the occasion arrived here this morning, ill," assured the judge. "He has been in bed at Major Anderson's all day, trying to gain strength for the effort here. He is undoubtedly delirious, and with many regrets, the audience is dismissed."

Gone was the Enforcement League, the presidency of Mrs. Betty Anderson; smashed was the long-planned lawn fête as celebration. Crash came all the schemes for social leadership!

As Everleigh Pearson passed a group of ladies on the stage, they sniffed like deerhounds. It might be delirium, but it certainly smelled like something else!

Bolivar Anderson was instantly to the rescue. He took Pearson by the arm and hushed his iteration for his two-hundred-and-fifty-dollar check for appearing.

"Here's your check. The automobile is waiting. You just have time to make your train. Right this way. I'll see you on board!"

Thus, drowning his voice and urging him forward, Bolivar loaded the distinguished guest into the automobile where his suit case already reposed. The ma-

chine shot forward, and he gayly waved his hands at various ladies on the way to the depot. Such is the exhilarating effect of ice water and fresh air!

The limited slid into the station as the automobile stopped. Pearson was rushed aboard, a ticket to the next station thrust into his hand, and in the one minute of the train's stop at Hillsboro the major talked fast and loudly. He wiped beads of sweat from his brow as he swung from the Pullman and rejoined Jim at the machine.

"Jim, you run across the street and buy two tin cups and a dozen sandwiches. Hurry now, while I write a note."

On a telegraph blank he indited a pencil scrawl:

DEAR BETTY: Everleigh was lit like a torchlight procession. I know you will want to get away from Hillsboro after the humiliation of that fiasco, and I am going right on down to Rummeneide and get the place ready for you. I know you are anxious to be out of that mess. Will look for you to-morrow or next day.

"Jim, you got that wonderful cordial all safe?"

"Yasser-ree. Right under de seat."

"And those marvelous peaches—I'm going to plant a brandy-peach orchard right away—you got them, too?"

"Safe as kin be!"

"Then you get this contraption down the south pike just as fast as you can make these wheels turn. I'm five months behind on my fishing now and can't waste any more time!"

Little did he know that within half an hour another machine would be speeding after him bearing imperative orders from his superior officer and concluding:

I am not going to run. I'm going to fight it out on this line if it takes five years. You come right on back here and stand your share and face the music. And there are some mighty pointed questions I am going to ask you, that have got to be answered, too!



# The Crooked Average

By Heather Benjamin

ILLUSTRATED BY T. VICTOR HALL

**"Not only is the average man a crook, but everybody—you and I included—is potentially a criminal," declared Hart. Whereupon he proceeded to prove it.**

THE two men sat in the now sadly deserted grill of a summer hotel, lingering over their coffee and highly satisfactory cigars, as was apparent from the expression on their faces.

"The average man is a crook," asserted Elmer Hart. By way of emphasis he forcefully puffed out a mouthful of smoke from his excellent cigar and looked at Morton in a way which seemed to challenge as well as welcome contradiction. Elmer Hart not only loved an argument, but he enjoyed puncturing worn-out platitudes. Too, he generally had an interesting, if eruptive, solution to the problems he attacked.

"Pretty sweeping statement, isn't it?" suggested Richard Morton, as he peeled a strip from the end of his cigar. He was a big, thickset, well-groomed man whose very air of success seemed to add to his one hundred and eighty pounds.

"But it's absolutely true," declared Hart with characteristic vigor. He was slight and energetic looking. His forehead receded a little and was very full above the brows which overhung his deep-set eyes and sometimes shaded their expression. Unlike his unimagi-

native friend, he had a liberal supply of that quality which gives color to life. "Not only is the average man a crook, but everybody—you and I included—is potentially a criminal."

Morton's dark eyes widened as if his conservative nature objected to the other's startling assertion.

"Don't you think that's putting it rather strong?"

"Not a bit!" Hart, whose every motion was a gesture, flicked the ash from his cigar. "Every man, woman, and child has the criminal instinct. As for the average man, no matter how respectable he may seem, he has all the elements that make a first-class trickster. If the temptation is strong enough, and if he thinks he has a chance to get away with it, he will fall from the moral heights like a ripe acorn from a tree."

"Trying to start an argument?" queried Morton, smiling undecidedly. "Or do you just want to be contrary?"

"Neither," declared Hart in his emphatic way. "I'm just stating my opinions."

Morton slowly tweaked his nose, a habit he had when his vocabulary momentarily failed him.

"Well, there's one thing I must say in favor of your opinions, old man. You're mighty careful to select them in such a way that they can't either be proved or disproved. For instance, we could keep arguing till doomsday over this idea of yours about the average man being a crook, and still we wouldn't get anywhere."

"Sure of that?" asked Hart absently just as the waiter entered and inquired if they wished anything else. As he directed his question to Morton, the more important-looking Hart studied him obliquely, and as an idea suddenly occurred to him, a close observer might have seen a shrewd and humorous glint flash across his deep-set eyes.

The waiter certainly did not. He was a rather fair, somewhat smallish man with a seamed face and mildly inquiring eyes, and he stood placidly waiting the pleasure of a reply.

"Your name?" Hart inquired sharply.

"Simon Payne," replied the waiter respectfully, turning in Hart's direction.

Hart's gaze rested on him a moment longer.

"Well, Simon, you may go. I'll ring if we want you again."



While pretending to admire a curious gargoyle on the mantel shelf, they watched Simon out of the corners of their eyes.

Simon bowed and withdrew hurriedly.

There was a moment's pause, during which both men smoked reflectively. Suddenly Hart leaned forward, looking at his friend, who was trimming the ash of his cigar and waiting for him to take the initiative.

"There goes your average man," commented Hart, nodding toward the door through which the waiter had just disappeared. "Average physique, average intelligence, average features—average everything. And I'll wager he's no more honest than the average man."

Morton laughed incredulously.

"Why, that fellow is as harmless as the day is long. He wouldn't rob a bird's nest. His very attitude almost begs you to excuse him for living. He's content to meander along well-worn ruts, lacking the spunk to get out and make tracks for himself. I simply can't imagine him doing anything unconventional, holding up a bank, or in any way going against the dictates of his conscience."

Hart's eyes twinkled and an enigmatic smile tugged at the corner of his lips as he settled the cushion behind his head more comfortably.

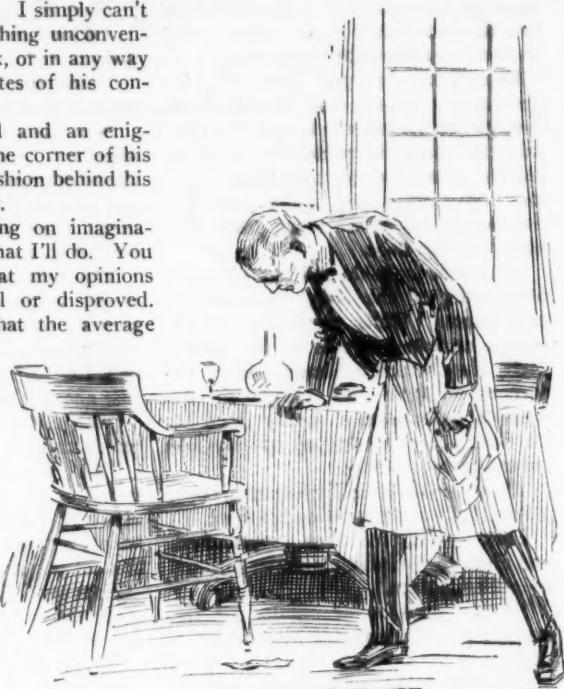
"You never were long on imagination, Dick. Tell you what I'll do. You said a minute ago that my opinions could never be proved or disproved. Well, I'll show you that the average man is a crook, and I'll prove it by the waiter who just went out the door."

"How?" asked Morton, becoming alert with interest, sensing quick action of some sort.

"By placing a temptation in his way." Hart laughed as he opened his wallet. "He's a one-hundred-dollar bill. I'm going to give Simon a chance to find it on the floor after we get up from the table. If he keeps it, as I think he will, my contention is proved. If he returns the bill to me, I'll admit the average man is honest. Incidentally, I'll bet you the amount of the bill that I'll never see it again."

"Fair enough, by gosh!" said Morton enthusiastically as he sensed a battle of wits. "But if Simon is as crooked as we think he is, you'll be throwing away a perfectly good hundred-dollar bill."

"Not at all." Hart looked ruefully at the bank note. "This bill is in itself proof of my contention that the average man is a crook. It's a counterfeit, so skillfully made that only an expert



Suddenly the waiter's gaze became rigidly fixed on the floor; then he stooped quickly.

could tell it isn't genuine. I should have turned it into the treasury department, but a whim prompted me to keep it as a souvenir of the time when I got stung. So, you see, if Simon keeps the bill, I'm nothing out. Instead I will be ahead of the game to the tune of the one hundred dollars you will pay me." He grinned as if assured that he had already won the wager.

"All right, go ahead and count your chickens before they are hatched.

Where shall we plant the temptation?"

"Oh, I'll let the bill slip from my pocket when I pay the check, and then we'll walk a little farther down the grill. There we will stop and light a cigarette and chat for a few minutes, just in case Simon should take it into his head to return the phony note."

Everything arranged, Hart rang for the waiter. Simon, obsequiously attentive, glided up to their table. As Hart paid the check, he pretended to be intensely interested in something Morton was saying, and while pocketing the change he let the bogus bank note flutter to the floor.

They left the table and moved to the other end of the long, low-ceilinged grill room. While pretending to admire a curious gargoyle on the mantel shelf, they watched Simon out of the corners of their eyes. Suddenly the waiter's gaze became rigidly fixed on the floor; then he stooped quickly and picked up something.

"Now we shall see," whispered Hart, a faint, half smile twisting his lips.

Soft, swift footsteps approached, and a shadow of disappointment passed over Hart's face.

"Better revise your opinion of the average man," suggested Morton in an undertone.

The waiter ran up to them, extending the counterfeit bill.

"You dropped this, sir," he announced breathlessly. His mild eyes with their sparsely fringed eyelashes looked a trifle anticipative.

Hart stoically accepted the bill and dropped a generous tip into Simon's honest palm.

"Thank you, sir." The waiter bowed, grinning widely now, and hurried away.

"Well, I lose," admitted Hart.

"I would hand that phony bill over to the government, if I were you," advised Morton. "It's a hoodoo. In

the meantime, don't forget that you owe me a hundred in real cash."

Hart was about to make a jesting reply when the head waiter appeared.

"Hope you found the service satisfactory?" he inquired solicitously.

Hart did not make a direct reply.

"Where did you get that waiter who served us?"

"Anything wrong?" The other seemed instantly to sense a complaint.

"On the contrary. The service was excellent. I carelessly dropped a hundred-dollar-bill, and it was returned to me almost immediately. The fellow could have easily kept it. Probably needed it, too."

The professional smile of the head waiter widened into something akin to genuine pleasure.

"Mighty glad to hear that, sir. Simon finished a term in the penitentiary just about a month ago and——"

"What?" exclaimed Hart and Morton in unison.

"Yes, sir, and he was recommended to me by a friend. I thought I would give the fellow a chance; he looked honest enough. I am sure glad to hear that he is going it straight."

Hart and Morton looked at each other with a baffled but curious expression as the head waiter moved away.

"Who wins?" asked Morton.

"It seems our wager hasn't decided anything," replied Hart. "The question still remains to be settled—is the average honest man a crook, or is the average crook honest? I'm hanged if I know the answer. By the way, I wonder if——"

He called the head waiter back.

"Say," he inquired, "do you happen to know what Simon was sent up for?"

The head waiter passed his hand across his forehead and thought a moment. Then his face brightened as he remarked:

"Why, he was one of the cleverest counterfeiters in the country."





# Mr. Essington *at Large*

By J. Storer Clouston

Author of "The Lunatic at Large," "Simon," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

The conclusion of one of SMITH'S most diverting serials—an adventure story, gay, funny, and romantic.

## CHAPTER XXV.

ON a certain afternoon Mr. Mason received a visitor. Annette saw him, as she saw every one who came to that house. How she managed it, she alone knew; but there she was, by some curious coincidence, passing through the hall just as this visitor was entering the library. Her brief glimpse showed him to be a stoutly built, elderly gentleman, with a heavy forehead and a chin somewhat receding, anxious eyes with loose bags of skin beneath them, and—despite his nervous manner—the air of a person of some consequence. She noticed, also, that he seemed on friendly terms with the butler and whispered something confidential as he passed into the room.

"Who is that gentleman, Mr. Cheal?" she asked with her most seductive smile, as the door closed behind him.

"A visitor for Mr. Mason," said Mr. Cheal.

"A visitor without a name?" she smiled.

But Mr. Cheal was caution itself this afternoon.

"If he wanted his name mentioned, I'd tell it you," said he.

"Oh, a mysterious visitor!"

"That's as may be," said Mr. Cheal, walking off. And then suddenly he turned and said, "Oh, by the way, don't you say nothing to Miss Staynes about any one having called."

"Then Mr. Meestery does not wish her informed?"

"You may take it that's how the land lies," he conceded.

"Oh, but I can take a hint!" she smiled. Then as she went upstairs she shrugged her shoulders and murmured, "I wonder who!"

Within the library Mr. Mason received his visitor apparently with more surprise than pleasure.

"Well, Uncle Joshua, what's brought you?" he asked. "You haven't come to see Beatrix, I hope."

"Not necessarily," said Sir Joshua, "unless——"

"Under no circumstances!" said Mr. Mason emphatically.

Though they stood in the relation of uncle and nephew by blood, and senior and junior partner in the firm of Horscham & Stukley by business arrangement, there was no doubt who was actually the dominating personality. Mr. Mason, indeed, spoke to his uncle this afternoon almost as he might to a clerk.

"Well," said Sir Joshua, "as a mat-

"Mr. Essington" made his first appearance in the May number.

ter of fact I didn't want her even to know I was here, unless there was necessity."

"There is none," Mr. Mason assured him. "It might spoil everything. You remember that I was to have a free hand?"

"I am not disputing it, Harry."

"All right. Then what brought you down?"

"Have you heard anything of Francis?"

"Not yet. Have you?"

Mr. Mason's manner was brief and, one would say, unconcerned. Sir Joshua glanced at him sharply.

"Don't you realize the danger?" he asked.

Mr. Mason merely shrugged his shoulders, but a twitch of his brows and a glint in his eye betrayed him.

"Pooh! There is none. What can a wandering lunatic do?"

"Francis is capable of any—er—eccentricity."

"Eccentricity! Exactly. And that's all he is capable of." He paused for a moment and then repeated in a manner somewhat at variance with his last words, "I asked you if you had heard nothing about him yourself. Have you?"

"Absolutely nothing at all."

Mr. Mason paced to the window and back again.

"Where the deuce can the man have got to!" he exclaimed. "I've put Pig-got on his track, and the little devil doesn't often lose the scent. Can Francis have committed suicide?"

Sir Joshua shook his head.

"The very last thing he is likely to do, I am afraid—that is to say, I should think."

"Then where has he hidden himself?"

Sir Joshua made no attempt to solve the problem.

"Have you heard anything further of Ridley?" he asked.

"I have had him watched. He isn't

with Francis; though I am absolutely certain he let him out!"

"What has he been doing?"

"He has been in London, consulting a lawyer evidently. He has been seen going into Perry, Bannerman & Haines' office."

"The criminal solicitors?" exclaimed Sir Joshua.

"Yes."

"But good heavens, Harry! I don't like this at all. Perry is the very last fellow we want poking his nose into our affairs!"

Harry Mason turned on him viciously.

"I wish to Heaven you would keep your sense of proportion!" said he. "We have done nothing illegal. You are her only acting guardian at present. You can take what steps you like. If you choose to place her in my care, who can question your decision?"

"I didn't choose."

Mr. Mason interrupted him sharply.

"You can't plead that excuse. You know perfectly well you can't! You are responsible, but, as I say, you have done nothing illegal, and you can snap your fingers at Perry and Ridley and company!"

"But if anything came out, it—er—it wouldn't look well, Harry."

"Look!" exclaimed Mr. Mason contemptuously. "What do looks matter at present? Do you or don't you want to see yourself in the dock? That's the whole point."

Sir Joshua winced.

"The speculation was yours," he protested. "And taking the trust money to make good your losses."

"My losses! They were the firm's. You are responsible. You know you are. You knew everything that was going on, or ought to have known."

"Ought!" groaned Sir Joshua. "That's different."

"Is it? If I stand in the dock, so will you, and you know it."

The unfortunate senior partner passed his handkerchief over his brow. His eyes shifted constantly, and it almost seemed as if the bags beneath them had got deeper since he came.

"If only your sister were here, Harry!" he began in a moment. "I have duties toward Beatrix after all, and leaving her alone with you— Can't you get Elizabeth to come, or some other woman?"

"And spoil the whole game? We are playing for high stakes and we can't afford to care what people might say if they knew. They don't know, and they shan't know. And, after all, what if they know? As her guardian, you hold all the trumps. I tell you again, you have a perfect right to place her in any home you please. And you can always forbid her marriage with anybody else! That will soon choke off Mr. Ridley when he realizes what it means. You told him emphatically and finally that you forbade the engagement, didn't you?"

"Yes, I wrote and told him so emphatically."

"He evidently doesn't believe you mean it yet. If he sees you are firm, that will be the end of him. And once she knows he is off for good, the road is clear. You've only got to be firm! There is absolutely nothing to fear in that case."

Sir Joshua looked up at the younger man as though he longed to be innoculated with his confidence.

"Is it possible for Perry to find out anything about the state of the firm's affairs?" he asked in a moment.

"Quite impossible. We are absolutely safe for a month at least."

Again he paced the room, his hands in his pockets and his eyes on the floor. Then he stopped abruptly before his uncle and said:

"I know their game perfectly! Mr. Ridley is putting his money on Essington. He has got him stowed away

somewhere and Perry and he are going to try to prove he is sane enough to give his consent, and then put the screw on you to consent too. It's a dangerous game for them if it gets out! Abetting the escape of a lunatic and keeping him in concealment is a pretty serious offense. Once we catch Francis, they are settled! The boot will be on the other leg then!"

"Can't you," Sir Joshua began again in a moment, "can't you induce Beatrix to take you without any further delay, and just as things stand?"

"One has to be devilish careful in that matter," said Mr. Mason.

"But time is precious, Harry!"

"I know it is." He stood silent for a minute and then suddenly exclaimed: "It might be worth risking something! I've half a mind to!"

A few minutes later Sir Joshua departed, as quietly and unostentatiously as he had come.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

A clock ticked on the dining-room mantelpiece, but that was the only sound in the room. Mr. Mason sipped his port in silence, and the fair young girl opposite kept her eyes fixed on her plate. They might have been sitting for a picture of marriage de convenance.

At last he spoke:

"You are desperately quiet to-night, Beatrix!"

Those who knew Harry Mason well would have perceived the effort it cost him to speak lightly and throw in his half laugh, but the girl simply took his words for what they seemed to be.

"I am very sorry, Cousin Harry," she said with a little smile which died away as suddenly as it came. "My thoughts were wandering; I—I am not very happy."

"What's the matter?"

She answered nothing for a minute, and then her words came with a rush.



"We are playing for high stakes and we can't afford to care what people might say if they knew. They don't know, and they shan't know.  
As her guardian, you hold all the trumps."

"I am unhappy about Philip! I must find out what has happened. I really must, Cousin Harry! You have been very kind to me, and I know Sir Joshua wants me to stay here till his house is ready for me, and I don't want to do anything to displease him, but I can't wait here in suspense any longer! I'm going to try and find out about Philip for myself!"

He controlled a start, but his stare sent her eyes down again.

"You mean you want to go yourself and—and make inquiries?"

She looked up again and met his gaze firmly.

"Yes," she said.

"You won't trust my word?"

"But you have been able to find out practically nothing!"

He finished his glass of port and seemed to come to a sudden resolution.

"Beatrix," he said in quite a different voice, "there are other men in the world who care for you besides this fellow Ridley; men who do appreciate you, who wouldn't desert you even for a single moment, who know what you are worth."

He had been speaking very earnestly so far and with a ring of suppressed emotion which pleased his own critical sense, but at these last words she chanced to look up from her plate for an instant, and he read a thought in her eyes which never could have sprung from Beatrix's simple heart.

"I mean what your heart and—er—beauty are worth," he explained hastily, but his critical sense missed the ring of genuine feeling this time. He tried to make up for it by still more fervor of expression. "You are the most charming girl I have ever seen, Beatrix! You are like a ray of"—his critical sense rejected "sunshine" hurriedly and he decided to hasten on to another simile—"you are like a jewel! You are like a cluster——"

This time he was interrupted by the

girl herself. She rose from the table, her eyes still downcast and her color high.

"You shouldn't say these things, Cousin Harry!" she said hurriedly. "I—I can't stay here any longer if you do!"

He had the self-restraint and tact to hurry to the door and hold it open, merely murmuring as she passed out:

"I am sorry, Beatrix, dear. I won't offend again!"

It was five minutes or so later, and Mr. Mason had already finished another glass of port and poured himself out yet a third, when the door opened as noiselessly as if a ghost were entering.

"Pardon my disturbing you, sir," said a voice at his back.

Mr. Mason turned with a start, a scowl still set on his brow.

"What the devil! Oh, it's you, Annette. Well?"

"What have you been doing?" she asked quietly.

"What d'ye mean?"

"You have done something to upset the little Miss Beatrix. What is it?"

"Is she still upset?"

"Very much upset. Have you forgotten what I did warn you? Have you not been careful?"

"Damn it, Annette," he answered.

She stopped him with a little up-raised finger.

"Ah, no swearing! I do not like to be sworn at; besides, it is bad for you—very bad. You must keep more cool till the time comes."

"But when is it to come? Do you know what she told me to-night? She said she was going to leave me and look for that creature Ridley!"

Annette opened her black eyes very wide.

"Such a little deceiver I never knew!" she exclaimed. "She has made me think—actually made me!—that Mr. Ridley was beginning to get for-

gotten. And all the time she is wanting him more than ever! Oh, but something must now be done."

"Just what I thought, and so I began to tell her that there were other men who admired her. I didn't even say I was speaking for myself."

She interrupted with a little mocking laugh.

"How simple men sometimes are! As if any woman in the world would not jump instantly to the conclusion a man meant himself, even if perhaps he really did not! Never, never say the word 'love' to a woman, even in joke, even as part of a sermon, unless you wish her to think she has been given another heart to play with! Bah! I am a woman and I know them."

"As a matter of fact I didn't actually use the word 'love'."

"Oh, but you need not say any more than 'like' to most women. Such fools they are—as foolish as men! So then she got offended, did she?"

"More or less."

"'More or less.' What a British expression! It would tell me nothing if I had not seen her afterward for myself."

"Look here, Annette," said he; "it would be much more to the point if you would tell me what I ought to do, and not what I ought not to have done. Can one afford to do nothing and simply keep on waiting, after what she said to me?"

"No," she said slowly. "No; something should be done." She came close up to his chair and lowered her voice. "She is in your house unprotected! What do you lack? Courage?"

He turned in his chair with a start.

"Hang it, Annette; there are limits!"

"On the other hand, there is failure!"

He hesitated for a moment.

"I—I'll think things over. Something must be done!"

"And what else is there?"

Again he hesitated, and then with a look of relief he saw the door open again. This time it was Mr. Cheal, the butler.

"Mr. Piggot is here to see you, sir," said he. "I have shown him into the library."

Mr. Mason sprang up on the instant. "I'll think about it," he murmured as he passed Annette.

She stood for a moment looking after him with unfathomable eyes. Then she said to herself:

"Piggot! What news has he brought?"

Mr. Cheal had disappeared when she went out into the hall. She gazed at the library door and then stealthily drew nearer it. All at once it opened and Mr. Mason glanced out. She smiled at him with impudent assurance.

"You are getting suspicious, too!" said she.

"I have need to be," he answered grimly, and pointed to the stairs.

"I have taught him something," she said to herself as she went up to her mistress' room. "I wonder whether I have taught him enough!"

Mr. Piggot sat very upright on the edge of his chair, his bowler hat in his hand, his sharp, close-set eyes fixed hard on Mr. Mason, as though the habit of transfixing people had become too confirmed to be broken even if the person were his own employer.

"I'm telling you the plain, simple truth, sir," said he. "That there man has vanished like as if he was a bloomin' firework! It's the mysteriousest thing ever I heard tell of, vanishing like a firework with 'Enry Piggot after 'im! I never knowed a man play such a trick on me before!"

"Tell me exactly what happened, so far as you were able to follow his movements," said Mr. Mason.

"Well, sir, 'ow he got away on the train to begin with, with both stations



bein' watched, is an unsoluble mystery to start on. Anyhow, he did get off in the train and fell in with a soft-headed young curate what was traveling by that train likewise. Essington stuffs 'im up about murderers wantin' to kill him, gets him to change clothes, and then pulls the communication cord and fires 'im out into the dark! That was 'is first giddy performance."

"Then I gather that he impersonated the curate somewhere?"

"With the selfsame curate's own rector! The curate bein', of course, unbeknown to the rector by sight. Well, I did the smart thing, if I says it myself, sir, by makin' straight for the rector to see if I could pick up any clues that way, and if that bloomin' rector 'adn't 'ave stopped to shave hisself, we'd have caught the weasel asleep! But he happened just to have got up—or else some one tipped him the wink—and so he spots us out o' the window, waits till we had left the trap in charge of a senseless idiot of a boy, and then slips out by the back door, tips the boy sixpence, and drives off in the trap, we swearin' at him out of the window! I never swore in presence of a clergyman before, but he was swearin' 'isself, too, loud and proper! I can't 'elp laughin' a bit now, sir, when I thinks of the situation!"

Mr. Mason did not seem in the least amused.

"And what happened next?" he asked sharply.

"Well, sir, Mr. Essington stopped at a shop in the road with his stolen 'orse and trap and asked the way to Kenton, so as to put us off the scent. Oh, he's a proper cunning one, is that there Essington! Actually what he did was to turn off in the other direction, plant his 'orse and trap in a wood, and join a swimmin' party what was bathing in a river—a schoolmaster and a lot of boys, they was. He challenges 'em all to a swimmin' race and then, when they

was all splashin' away in the river, he nips off with the master's bicycle and clothes, and that was the very last any 'uman eye has seen him!"

"You mean to tell me you never got on to his track again?"

Mr. Piggot shook his head mournfully.

"I went to Kenton, followin' the false clew—for one 'ad to try it, sir, even though I did 'ave my suspicions. But of course there was no Mr. Essington there. Then as soon as I heard of the swimmin' performance, I started lookin' in that direction, but naturally he was far enough away by that time. So then I says to myself, 'Better 'ave a squint at that there Ridley genelman, seein' there's nothing doing 'ere!' Accordingly and without wastin' time I skips up to London and lies low outside o' Mr. Ridley's chambers. He was in 'em right enough, and by waitin' a bit I tracks him along to Perry, Bannerman & Haines, and then I writes you, sir, to that effect."

Mr. Mason nodded.

"I know. I got your letter. Any later news?"

"Yes, sir; though it has 'ad a kind of unsatisfactory endin', too. In fact, I never did run up against such a crowd of mysteries and vanishing genelmen! It's more like a conjurin' turn at a music 'all than a proper professional job!"

Mr. Mason seemed impatient tonight.

"Get on to the point!" said he. "What happened?"

"Well, sir, still keepin' my eye on Mr. Ridley, I next sees him leavin' his rooms with a letter sticking out of his pocket, and I made so free, sir, as to rub up against him in Piccadilly Circus, and that there letter changed 'ands, so to speak. 'Ope I wasn't exceeding my instructions; sir?"

"Not a bit. Who was it from?"

"His friend Mr. Toothill, the other genelman what was with 'im at Charing

Cross Station. There was nothing much in the letter except that he seemed to be wondering what had become of Ridley and wanting him to come down and have a confab. He was stayin' with 'is aunt, he said, but the only address was Salchester, so I ups and offs to Salchester, thinking it just as well to be present likewise at that confab, supposin' it could be so arranged. My idea bein', you see, sir, as perhaps I might get on to Mr. Essington's track again that way."

"I see. Did you find Toothhill?"

"I did, sir, and I takes some credit to myself, too. Salchester is a biggish mark, seein' I didn't even know the aunt's name, much less her address. However, I 'ears there was to be a big fancy-dress ball at a Mr. Dewhurst's, so I offs to the 'ouse, says I was a reporter come down special from London to report the ball, and gets the butler to give me a list of the guests what was expected. And there was Mr. Toothhill on the list, right enough! Accordingly, I waits in the crowd outside the door what was gathered to see the ladies and genelman arrivin' as kings and queens and red Indians and Chinese puzzles and 'Eaven knows what else. Presently up comes Toothhill, disguised as a pirit king, pistols and black mustache and I don't know all what. But I spotted 'im right enough! And then I lights my pipe and settles down to watch that door till the bloomin' ball was over, even if it was to last till six o'clock in the mornin'."

He paused and transfixed his employer with an even more gimletty eye than usual.

"And do you know what 'appened, sir?"

Mr. Mason seemed to lack appreciation of dramatic effect.

"How the deuce should I?" he demanded. "Get on with your story."

Mr. Piggot, however, was not to be

balked of his drama. Lowering his voice, he hissed out the startling information.

"I waited till four o'clock, when they turned out the lights and shut the front door, and Mr. Toothhill never came out of that 'ouse alive!"

"What! D'you mean to say he was dead?"

Mr. Piggot shook his head somberly.

"I wish I even knew that much, sir. He simply vanished, same as Essington had done. And then I thought I 'ad better come straight on to you, sir, and report."

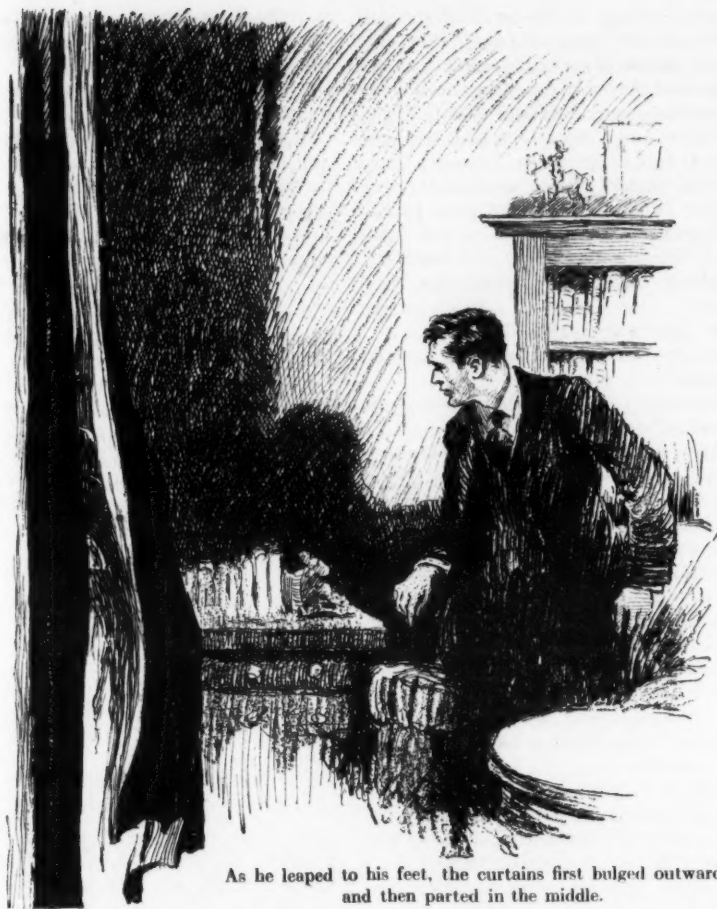
For a few minutes there was silence while Mr. Mason pondered over this singular story. Then he said:

"Well, Piggot, I can't say I feel very satisfied with your performance. You'll start again to-morrow, and this time you've got to nail Essington! In the meantime you had better go along and tell the butler to give you some supper and see about putting you up for the night."

Bowler hat in hand, Mr. Piggot marched off in search of Mr. Cheal, while his employer sank into his easy-chair very thoughtfully indeed.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

The evening wore on, but instead of spending the greater part of it with his guest, as usual, Mr. Mason sat in his library, smoking and frowning at the fire. He seemed to be debating some troublous point, alternately urging himself to a resolution and then shrinking from it. The clock had just struck ten when he was sharply aroused by a sound, cautiously made, but quite unmistakable. It was the sound of a window being drawn up, and to confirm it, a breath of outside air swept into the room. As he leaped to his feet, the curtains first bulged outward and then parted in the middle, and there emerged a distinguished-looking gentleman at-



As he leaped to his feet, the curtains first bulged outward and then parted in the middle.

fired in a gray tweed suit and a pair of brown boots.

"How are you, Harry?" said this apparition, holding out a friendly hand. "That's a devilish easy window to open."

Mr. Mason ignored the hand altogether. Indeed, he seemed not to see it at all, so disturbing was the effect of this visitor.

"Francis!" he gasped.

"My dear fellow," said Mr. Essing-

ton in cordial apology, "didn't you know I was at large? I thought you had probably heard and would be keeping your fattest calf on the chance of my turning up."

"Yes, I—I did hear you had escaped," said Mr. Mason, perceiving the proffered hand at last, but grasping it rather limply. "But I—er—had no idea you would venture here."

"Venture?" said Mr. Essington. "Be hanged to you, Harry! Where else

could I safely count on finding a pal who wouldn't give me away? My dear chap, we've given each other bad advice and led each other into evil company for nearly five and twenty years. 'If there's one fellow in this world who is too bad a hat himself to split on a fellow sinner,' I said to myself, 'that fellow is Harry Mason!' He paused and looked his old friend up and down with some appearance of anxiety. "What's the matter with you?" he asked. "I'm dashed if I don't believe you think it's my ghost!"

Harry Mason made a brave attempt to laugh.

"I see it's your old self right enough, Francis!"

Mr. Essington shook a humorous head.

"Not my old self, Harry; a great improvement on it. My dear fellow, I've got a crack in my head at present that lets in new ideas literally by the dozen. My one worry is that I feel it gradually closing up. In fact, I'm beginning to get in a deuce of a funk of turning sane again."

"Oh? Ha, ha! Really?" laughed Mr. Mason, much more naturally this time, but with an eye, half abstracted, half wary.

"After the life I have been living," Mr. Essington went on, "honesty will be a damnable nuisance and responsibility, an unconscionable bore. Imagine paying one's tradesmen when one doesn't feel inclined to, or not kissing one's housemaid when one does! The trammels of perfect sanity will be the very devil. Whereas now—got a pretty housemaid, Harry?"

Once more Mr. Mason laughed, and each time he was doing it better and better. His eye also seemed to have come to some decision.

"Sorry I can't oblige you, Francis," he said, "but I can give you a room for the night. You've come prepared to stay with me, I presume?"

"I have certainly come to stay with you, but not prepared. It isn't entirely my fault, I may mention. I've taken the trouble to steal two lots of luggage, but most unluckily lost 'em both."

By this time Mr. Mason had acquired quite a jovial air.

"You'll have a drink, Francis, won't you?" he cried.

"Several, thank you," said Mr. Essington, throwing himself into an easy-chair and stretching out his legs. "These boots are borrowed, and a trifle loose. I know nothing that makes one thirstier than loose boots. Hullo, have I frightened you away, Harry?"

Mr. Mason had pressed the bell during this last speech, and then, with a curious gleam of inspiration in his eye, started suddenly for the door.

"Afraid the bell may be out of order," he said over his shoulder. "I'd better tell Cheal myself."

He was out of the room just in time to meet his butler in the hall. His anxiety about the bell had been, it would seem, unnecessary.

"Tell Piggot to come here at once!" he commanded in a guarded voice, and then moving to the farther end of the hall, he waited, one eye on the library door. It remained closed, and he began to breathe a little more easily.

Mr. Essington, in point of fact, made no effort to follow his old friend, nor did he exhibit the least scepticism or concern, but lay back in his easy-chair with his feet stretched to the fire till Mr. Mason returned. Even then his host was saved the necessity of an apology for his absence, for he began at once:

"Harry, old chap, if I were unlucky enough to have a conscience at present, it would have a weight on it. Did you ever hear of Miss Beatrix Staynes?"

"Did I ever hear——" repeated Mr. Mason in a curious voice and with a

still more curious look in his eye. "Why?"

Mr. Essington stared at him in turn very hard.

"What have you heard of her?" he asked.

"Heard? What d'ye mean?"

"I mean that you looked as if I had asked you whether you'd been picking my pocket, and as if you had been!"

Mr. Mason laughed with remarkable vigor and very creditable success.

"My dear fellow, I was so utterly astonished to hear you remembering your duties! She is your ward, isn't she?"

"My first and, I hope, my last offense of that kind. The young minx seems to have run away with somebody."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Mr. Mason with an expression of vast surprise, "who did she run away with?"

"A gentleman in a fur coat, I believe. Those fur coats seem to play the devil with susceptible women, Harry. I really must invest in one myself. Not that astrakhan has served me badly, but fur can be guaranteed to kill."

"You don't know anything more about the man?"

Mr. Mason was filling a pipe and scarcely looked up as he asked the question.

"Absolutely nothing; and that's where my conscience ought to be pricking me. It's my duty, Harry, to run this ravisher to earth."

At that moment the butler entered with a tray, but Mr. Essington went on without regarding him.

"The mysterious disappearance of the fair but Miss Beatrix Staynes is a puzzle——"

"Francis!" muttered his host, and indicated the servant with a frown. As he lit his pipe his hand was shaking.

"Harry," said his visitor when Cheal had left the room, "you are getting nervy. You really must join my pleas-

ure trip! That fellow can never have heard of Miss Staynes."

"Oh, no! Of course not! No, no!" Mr. Mason admitted. "Still, my dear chap, I hate talking about—er—people one knows before servants. On principle, you know, simply on principle."

"I must remind you," said his old friend with a humorous smile, "that I have known you practically all my life, and your refreshing freedom from principles has always been your chief attraction."

"Not in matters like this," Mr. Mason assured him. "I have always been very particular about such things. Well, you were telling me about your ward's disappearance. When did you hear of it?"

His guest helped himself to a whisky and soda, and during the minute that his back was turned, the mask slipped from Mr. Mason's face. He craned his neck forward as he stood before the fire, listening intently to each word, and weighing—it would seem—its import.

"During my recent retirement from the world," said Mr. Essington, "a very sick-looking lover in a well-cut coat brought me the news that his lady love had absconded with the fur-lined ravisher. Being her guardian, I looked as serious as my mental condition permitted, and promised to make inquiries. You haven't seen her, have you?"

He turned and faced his old friend, his tumbler in his hand. The mask was replaced on the instant.

"Me!" cried Harry Mason. "Why the deuce should you think I was in the know?"

"I merely wondered," said Mr. Essington. "The bereaved lover had got it into his head that your respected uncle, old Joshua H., had something to do with it. It sounded improbable, but supposing, by any chance, Joshua had taken to flapper shooting, I thought it likely you'd been coaching him."

Mr. Mason shook his head and laughed very frankly and naturally.

"If Uncle Joshua has been on the warpath, it has been without consulting me, I assure you."

"Well," said Mr. Essington easily, "I can now at least say I have made inquiries and they have led to nothing. What guardian could do more?" He rose again, remarking, "Is that a cigar box I see?"

As he turned his back again, the mask slipped off once more. "Thank Heaven!" manifestly summarized Mr. Mason's first sensations. And as evidently his next thought was, "Has he told me the truth?" But when Essington returned to his chair, a cigar in his mouth, he saw the same genial old friend standing before the fire.

"A queer story!" the old friend observed. "And that's the whole of it, is it?"

"All but a few details, most of which I have forgotten. Oh, by the way, though, there was one rather rum little circumstance. There has been a fellow on my track who isn't one of Jenkinson's people at all, a rat-faced little chap, in a bowler hat like a sitz bath. This very self-same fellow, it seems, was mixed up in the abduction of Miss Beatrix!"

Mr. Mason's eyes were very wary now.

"That—er—seems a very curious coincidence," he remarked.

"It isn't a coincidence," said Mr. Essington calmly.

Mr. Mason started.

"What d'ye mean?"

"I mean that if I weren't on a pure pleasure trip and not worrying about trifles at present, I should say that there's some devilish queer game afoot, in which—the Heaven knows how!—I'm mixed up. However, I've come here for a quiet night, the loan of a razor, and your company, Harry, and be hanged to the beggar in the bowler!"

Mr. Mason laughed very cheerfully indeed; almost as if he were relieved.

"Finish your drink and have another, Francis!" said he, and taking his guest's glass he refilled it and handed it back. This time it was Mr. Essington who watched his host, though in a very friendly, and even sympathetic, spirit it would seem, to judge from his eyes and the wrinkles round them.

"Harry," he said suddenly, "you are damnably worried about something to-night."

Harry Mason looked at him quickly.

"What makes you think so?"

"I don't think so; I know it. What's the trouble? Remember, I'm your oldest companion in crime; you couldn't shock me if you tried."

Mr. Mason did not meet his eye.

"It's only a little business worry," he said briefly. "Nothing to bother about."

"Well, old chap, if it's a lady, I'd woo her for you if you'd introduce me; if it's money, I'd write you a check if anybody would cash it; and if it's an enemy, I'd knock him down if I was big enough. You see I know the whole duty of a friend, and you can think the offer over. And now, I've been living the strenuous life lately so what about bed?"

There was no doubt that Harry Mason looked worried. For a moment he seemed too confused to speak. Then he recovered his laugh, though it was one of his poorest efforts yet.

"Finish that drink and have another before you go!" he cried. "Come on! I insist!"

"One of the reasons why I knew you were upset was the way you mixed my drink," smiled Essington. "This is nearly half whisky. No more, thank you!"

"Just a small one!"

"Do you want to make me drunk?"

"No, no, no, my dear fellow!" Mr. Mason assured him somewhat hurriedly and with great emphasis. "Why the



deuce should I want to make you drunk, Francis?"

"I was wondering," said Francis.

His old friend laughed noisily at the bare idea as he led him from the room.

Mr. Essington shot him a curious glance, but made no comment at all this time.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

"All I need for the night," said Mr. Essington as he went upstairs with his old friend, "is a suit of pajamas, a pair of slippers, and a clean handkerchief; especially the handkerchief. I've blown my nose on one hard-worked wipe for three consecutive days."

"I have told Cheal to get your room ready," said his host, "and you'll no doubt find everything except the handkerchief. I'll get you one of mine."

A fire was burning in the bedroom, a soft-shaded electric lamp lit it pleasantly, the pajamas lay across the bed, the slippers lay beside it, the clean handkerchief was now in his pocket, and when Mr. Essington had said good night to his old friend and dropped into a basket chair before the hearth, he congratulated himself very heartily on his judicious choice of a lodging for the night.

"I suppose old Harry is what the strictly virtuous would call a pretty bad egg, and there's no doubt at all that at this moment he has got some particularly heinous crime on the place where his conscience ought to be," he said to himself, "but he's a first-class pal for a fellow sinner in a tight place, and, by Jove, he does know how to make one comfortable!"

For a few minutes he indulged in these grateful reflections, and then, still sitting over the fire, he proceeded to take off his boots.

"I'd better put 'em outside the door," he thought, and carried them across the room. He laid his hand on the

knob, turned it once, and turned it again.

"Locked in!" he murmured.

It was a very alert and wakeful Francis Essington who stood with his boots in his hand gazing at that locked door.

"By Heaven, I know now what was worrying Harry!" he thought, and it was as well his old friend was not there to see the expression on his face in that moment of realization.

For a brief space he still stood there, thinking intently. Then his eye lit up, and, prompt as ever, he instantly pulled on his boots, rang his bell, and then sank into the basket chair in the attitude of a man half asleep.

"He is turning the key as well as the handle!" he said to himself a minute or two later, but when the door opened and Mr. Mason himself entered, he found his guest apparently quite asleep. For a moment Mr. Mason studied him very attentively, and then he asked:

"Did you ring Francis?"

"Hullo! My dear chap!" exclaimed Mr. Essington, starting out of his slumber. "I'm frightfully sorry for bringing you up like this, but the fact is I feel more fagged out than I realized. Do you mind asking them not to call me in the morning, but just let me sleep on till I wake myself?"

Mr. Mason was exceedingly pleasant and agreed at once.

"I hope you'll have a good night's rest," said he.

This time his guest followed him to the door.

"Harry," said he, "you deserve the compliment I have paid you!"

"And what is that?"

"The compliment of breaking into your house, throwing myself on your hospitality, and trusting you to behave as an old pal and a good sportsman. I'd trust devilish few fellows to do exactly the right thing under the cir-



"Who—who are you?" she asked, her voice instinctively almost as hushed as his.

circumstances, but I knew I could trust you."

In the course of this flattering speech, Mr. Mason edged out of the room, and his guest took up his position in the open door.

"Not at all, not at all," said Mr. Mason somewhat hurriedly. "Well, good night; you had better be getting off to bed, hadn't you?"

"I really can't thank you enough, Harry. It's the thorough way you do things that takes my fancy."

Mr. Essington was still standing in the doorway, and apparently disposed to pay compliments for some time longer. His host lingered for a moment, reluctance to leave in his eye, and then, as Mr. Essington began again, abruptly turned away.

"You are really a damned good fellow, Harry."

"Not a bit. Good night," said Harry, and turned down the passage, his old friend still standing in the open door, waving a genial farewell.

Once round the first corner he paused and stood still as a mouse, listening intently. A second or two passed, and he heard the bedroom door shut. He waited for a few moments longer and then softly tiptoed back and silently turned the key. Mr. Essington's bedroom door was locked again.

In the other direction stretched a long, dim corridor, and as he lingered for an instant by the door to make sure that his guest within had not heard him, he seemed to catch one single, muffled cry from some room down this passage. He held his breath and listened again, but there was not another sound to be heard.

"My nerves!" he said to himself ir-

ritably, and stole away and down to the library again.

There Mr. Mason mixed himself nearly as stiff a whisky and soda as he had given his guest, and then took out his watch and made a rapid calculation.

"If Piggot has wasted no time, they should be here in an hour," he said to himself.

While Mr. Mason was waiting cat-like round the corner, a tall, gray figure was speeding on tiptoe down the long, dim corridor.

"Can I reach the end before he comes back?" he asked himself as he fled. "No; too risky!" And in the same instant that he came to this decision, he opened at random the nearest door and shut it stealthily behind him.

"The devil and all!" he said to himself.

He was in a room faintly lit by a dying fire, and hardly had he closed the door before a bed began to creak, very gently but quite unmistakably. Glancing down at his light-gray suit, ghostly in the semidarkness, Mr. Essington was visited by one of his most brilliant inspirations.

"I'll be a spook!" he thought, and whipping out his handkerchief, was about to throw it over his face, when, with a sharp click, an electric light by the bedside was turned full on and the adventurer beheld one of the most charming pictures imaginable.

A fair young girl with rippling hair and parted lips, her head upraised from a lace-edged pillow, was gazing at him out of a pair of pleading, frightened, tender eyes.

"Oh!" she began.

"Hush!" whispered the adventurer urgently. "A thousand pardons! I've made a shocking mistake, but just give me five minutes' sanctuary, like a dear, good girl!"

"Who—who are you?" she asked, her

voice instinctively almost as hushed as his.

To himself he said, "And who the deuce are you?" Aloud, or rather in a guarded whisper, he inquired:

"Have you ever heard of Harry Mason's old friend, Francis Essington?"

What the resourceful gentleman proposed to do was to declare himself either to be the said Essington or Mr. Essington's doctor come in search of him, according to the manner in which the name was received. Its actual reception, however, proved to be astonishingly outside his calculations.

"Mr. Francis Essington!" she exclaimed. "Why, of course. He is my guardian!"

"Your——" Mr. Essington paused and gazed at her very hard indeed. "May I ask who you are?"

"Beatrix Staynes," said she.

"Beatrix Staynes!" he gasped.

"Are you Mr. Essington?" she asked.

"I am," said he, "and so——" He was about to say "and so Harry Mason is your fellow sinner," but there was something so innocent, pure, and confiding in her face that his tongue was stayed. Even in that instant an inkling of the real truth flashed across his mind.

"My dear girl," he demanded, "how do you come to be here?"

"I am staying with Mr. Mason," she said simply. "My other guardian, Sir Joshua, wanted me to."

"The deuce he did!"

She sat up in bed and looked at him with sudden apprehension.

"Why, is—is anything the matter?"

"Merely that you are in the hands of a very thorough pair of scoundrels."

Her startled eyes opened wide.

"Scoundrels! Sir Joshua and Cousin Harry?"

"Cousin Blackguard!" said he.

Rat-tat! came a gentle knock upon the door.

"My maid!" she whispered.

"Don't give me away!" he whispered back, and the next instant was flattened behind a hanging dressing gown.

"Come in!" said Beatrix, a quaver in her voice.

Through a peep hole in the lace of the gown, Mr. Essington watched the slip of a maid glide in, like some evil, bright-eyed little snake, he thought; and it seemed to him that in all his adventures he had scarcely been in quite so tight a corner.

"Pardon me, miss," said she, "but I thought I heard voices in your room. Could it possibly be?"

As she spoke, her black eyes were roving round the room. For a perceptible space they rested on the dressing gown and seemed suddenly to open a little wider.

"Voices?" said Beatrix. "Oh, no, Annette."

Her voice failed her in the midst of her denial. The black eyes had fallen on a white object lying on the floor, and the next instant Annette had picked it up.

"A gentleman's handkerchief," she smiled. "How very strange!"

The hidden visitor watched her turn the handkerchief very deliberately in her hand till she could read the name on it. And then she smiled again, a smile of profound satisfaction.

"I beg your pardon, miss," she said with curious significance. "I see that there were no voices after all!"

And with that she laid the handkerchief daintily on the bed, threw a parting glance—wicked, humorous, and knowing—at the dressing gown, and glided out again.

It was a surprisingly sobered guardian who stepped out into the room when the door had safely closed, and a trembling and bewildered ward who gazed up at him from the bed.

"What did she mean?" she cried.

Mr. Essington pocketed the handkerchief.

"This was lent me by Harry Mason," said he. "His name is on it."

"But did she actually think——"

She stopped abruptly, her face flushing scarlet.

"My dear girl," said he, with a gentleness which would have vastly surprised most of Francis Essington's acquaintances, "don't worry—there's no need now; and don't think about it. I'll do that for you. Just give me the answers to one or two questions. When did you get that maid?"

"Just before I left Switzerland."

"And who engaged her for you?"

"My guardian, Sir Joshua."

"Mason's uncle! The man who sent you to this house! Do you begin to see?"

"You mean she isn't to be trusted?"

"Not even as far as you can see her!"

"And—and Mr. Mason?"

"You can guess the kind of scoundrel he is from this little incident. But you are quite safe now! Don't think any more about it. Tell me this, Beatrix. Did you write a note to Ridley telling him to meet you at Victoria instead of Charing Cross?"

"Never!" she cried. "Do you mean to say he got such a note?"

He nodded.

"Forged by your precious maid, no doubt, who is in Cousin Harry Mason's pay."

"Then Philip hasn't forgotten me?"

"He has been looking for you ever since."

"Take me away from here!" she cried.

Mr. Essington became the man of prompt, not to say headlong, action on the instant.

"I'll get into that wardrobe," said he, "and give you exactly ten minutes to dress. If you take one second more you'll have to bolt without your petticoat!"

And before she could even answer,

the wardrobe door had closed upon her newly found guardian.

Nine minutes later two stealthy figures were tiptoeing down the long corridor, while Mr. Essington's door still stood securely locked and his host was dozing in the library, waiting for the arrival of Mr. Piggot and the police.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

"House-breaking is not very difficult, especially breaking out," said Mr. Essington as he caught his descending ward in his arms under the gun-room window.

The sickle moon was two nights broader than it had been when he last left his host's mansion thus informally, and the still garden was barred alternately by brilliant moonlit patches and the inky shades of box and yew.

"Keep in the shadow as much as you can!" he counseled as they stole down a long graveled path.

They had left the silent house some thirty yards behind, and the hurrying girl, clinging to her guardian's arm, was beginning to breathe freely at last, when of a sudden the shadow of a yew just ahead was doubled by something which started from behind it. A broad figure barred their way and the next instant a voice rang out:

"Beatrix!"

"Charles Toothill!" she gasped.

But already the aspect of Charles had changed from welcoming to formidable.

"Who is that with you?" he demanded. "Essington, by Heaven! Unhand that lady, sir! Unhand her instantly or I knock you down!"

"Charles has evidently learned that by heart," observed Mr. Essington.

"Let go of that lady," thundered Mr. Toothill.

The lady interrupted him urgently.

"Where is Philip?" she cried. "Is he with you?"

"He is watching the front of the house. But this man, Beatrix——"

"Go and tell Philip I am here!"

Mr. Toothill's voice lost a little of its truculence.

"I—I can't leave you with——"

"Go and bring Philip!" she commanded, her blue eyes not at all gentle now.

"All right," said Charles submissively. "But——"

"Go!"

And Charles went.

"Our friend Tooting would probably make an excellent job of digging a drain or pushing a mowing machine," observed Mr. Essington, who seemed to have entirely recovered from his brief spell of serious-mindedness, and was already lighting one of his inevitable cigars. "I can also imagine him driving a hearse very creditably, if the traffic were light, or even carrying baggage into a quiet temperance hotel. Another suitable vocation would be assistant to a three-card expert, the fellow who sits with his mouth open planking down the firm's half sovereigns *pour encourager les autres*. Or something in the smock frock and rattle line."

"Oh, I do hope he'll hurry!" sighed the slender figure by his side.

"By Jove, I beg your pardon!" said the guardian courteously. "I had begun to forget I was merely gooseberry in a young romance. Ah, here comes the lucky fellow! I would it were I, my dear girl, who is going to be kissing you within the next ten seconds!" And as she suddenly left his side and hurried down the path, he added with an air of great sincerity, "I would do it devilish thoroughly; she's a most uncommon pretty girl!"

Across the moonlit lawn, two black shadows rushed together, and then became but one.

"Lucky, lucky devil!" sighed Mr. Essington and, turning his back,

strolled down the path with an unusually sentimental air.

A heavy footstep crunched on the gravel behind him, and a voice, less truculent than before, but very stern and solemn, said:

"I wish to speak to you, Mr. Essington."

For a moment Mr. Essington surveyed his late victim in cool, embarrassing silence. Then with perfect, but very distant courtesy, he replied:

"I shall be very happy to hear anything you have to say for yourself, Mr. Tooting, and perhaps it would save time if it were to take the form of answering one or two questions in which I am interested. How do you and your friend happen to be here to-night?"

Nothing had been farther from the mind of Mr. Toothill than to submit quietly to an examination himself, but the ascendancy established by Mr. Essington's dominating air and cool politeness was remarkable. For a moment he stared very hard and seemed to hesitate. Then he answered:

"Well, if you want to know, Ridley got a wire last night telling him this man Mason's address and sayin' he had a girl staying with him."

"I did want to know," said Mr. Essington, if possible still more courteously than before. "That, in fact, was why I asked. I am much obliged to you for this information. By whom was this wire sent?"

"Our lawyer, Mr. Perry. He has been making inquiries for us."

"So you have been accompanying Mr. Ridley in his quest?"

"Well," admitted Charles, "I suppose I ought to have said he was making inquiries for Philip."

"So I suspected. And what put Mr. Perry on to Mason's track?"

"Oh, we had our suspicions of him. Or rather," Charles corrected himself candidly, "it was Philip who suspected Mason. In fact, Philip has done the

whole thing, while I was juggins enough to be lyin' low at Salchester!"

"Has he discovered Mr. Mason's motive for this performance?"

"Well, Perry tells us—that's to say tells Philip, that there are queer rumors in the city about Mason; goin' to be a smash, they say."

"Ah!" said Mr. Essington. "I begin to understand!"

"But anyhow, thank Heaven, we've found Beatrix at last."

"In Mr. Mason's custody?" Mr. Essington inquired gently.

"No—er—I suppose you got her out of it."

"It almost looked like it, didn't it?"

"Well, we are awfully obliged to you then!"

"My dear Tooting, you are improving rapidly!" said Mr. Essington cordially. "Have a cigar?"

"Thank very much, but—er—my name is Toothill."

"I shall never remember the difference," smiled Mr. Essington, who had apparently begun to find the strain of sustained dignity somewhat wearisome, "so I'm going to call you Charles, and the first bottle we meet, we'll have a drink on the strength of it!"

Meanwhile, in the deepest shadow of the shrubbery two voices were murmuring ardently and low, and two hearts seemed to grow more full of happiness with every moment snatched from the uncertain venture ahead.

"Where shall we go, Philip? What are we going to do now?" she asked at last.

"I haven't thought beyond this moment!" he confessed. "But Essington must be warned, and we must go somewhere for the night. I don't want to move!"

"But we must, Philip!" she sighed; and after deciding to move for several minutes longer, they moved at last.

"My dear fellow," said Mr. Essington as he grasped the grateful lover's





"Keep in the shadow  
as much as you can!"  
he counseled.

hand, "it is I who am under a very deep obligation to you. But for you, I might never have made the acquaintance of one of the most charming girls it has ever been my luck to meet. Why nobody should have told before how pretty she was, I can't imagine: Did they actually suppose a guardian was going to interest himself in a ward who might have been forty round the waist for all he knew? Was it seriously imagined that he would take a plain child

to the Zoölogical Gardens or chaperon an ugly débutante?"

Philip listened to these speculations of his fiancée's guardian with the respect to which they were entitled, and then he said:

"Pardon my interrupting you, Mr. Essington, but I must tell you I saw that little spy in the bowler leaving the house over an hour ago."

The philosopher became the man of action again on the instant.

"This way!" said he. "Follow me; I know the country round here."

"What are we going to do?" asked Beatrix as she hurried at his side.

"My dear child," said he, with a smile that made her swear by her new guardian forever more, "we are going to try and make you happy."

She smiled up at him bewitchingly.

"I can never do enough to thank you, Mr. Essington!"

He looked down at her with ever-increasing approval.

"You can begin by calling me Cousin Francis," said he, "with the accent on the 'Francis,' and the 'Cousin' as though you didn't quite mean it." And then in a tone of fervent regret, he added, "Why was I never told before? If they had even sent me your photograph, I'd have been a model guardian! It shows that it is always worth while having a look at a girl."

### CHAPTER XXX.

The spacious morning room wherein Sir Joshua Horsham enjoyed the forenoon sunshine, the easy-chair in which he sat, the orderly array of magazines and reviews on the table by his side, the fragrance of the superlative Havana which had kept him company for the past half hour, all bore evidence of a prosperous past, and—one would say—an enviable present. Whenever he cared to raise his eyes from the *Times* and glance out of the mullioned windows, trim lawns and a timbered park were there to gratify his taste for a dignified setting to a dignified gentleman; and yet, though his eye wandered constantly from the city page, it seemed oblivious this morning to sunshine or turf or flowers.

Among all his acquaintances, few had seen him look exactly as he looked just now. Possibly a good many other dignified personages would surprise their friends if they could catch a

glimpse of them alone meditating on a knotty problem. Sir Joshua had not infrequently been described as "benevolent-looking." That phrase would not have been applied to him this morning. And a very singular resemblance might have been noted every now and then, as a certain expression came into his face. It was a resemblance to his nephew, Mr. Harry Mason, and not to Mr. Mason in his more cordial hours. And if an observer could have read his thoughts, he would have been struck by a still more surprising circumstance; for it was when his thoughts were running on Mr. Mason that his expression was most like his nephew's, and least benevolent. Once he even murmured audibly:

"The devil take Harry and his infernal schemes!"

The forenoon was wearing on and he was still sitting with the *Times* opened at the same page, immersed in the same thoughts, when the door opened, and a butler as dignified as the house and the grounds, uttered two words that seemed to hit Sir Joshua like a rifle bullet.

"Miss Beatrix Staynes!" he announced.

And then before the eminent financial magnate had time even to begin to recover from this shock, the same solemn voice announced:

"Mr. Mandell-Essington! Mr. Ridley!"

"How do you do, Sir Joshua?" smiled Beatrix, her color a little high, her eyes a little anxious, but her voice so sweet and irresistible that her guardian's first acute consternation seemed a little eased by the very sound of it. "I do hope you'll forgive us bursting in upon you like this!"

"Forgive you, my dear Beatrix?" cried her other guardian. "If Sir Joshua doesn't feel himself to be the most fortunate fellow either in or out of the city, I'll disown him! Aren't

we a pair of lucky dogs, Horsham, to have such a ward? And here's the detested, but enviable Ridley who's going to take her away from us!"

Sir Joshua had begun to recover his wits by this time.

"I had hardly expected to see Mr. Ridley," he began stiffly.

Mr. Essington interrupted him with gay good humor.

"Now, now, Horsham!" said he. "We all know your savage bark, and the dear, good heart that wouldn't let you bite a butterfly if you tried! Philip Ridley is a very old friend of mine, one of the best fellows breathing, and literally made for Beatrix! I've brought them to get your blessing. I have given them mine."

"Yours!" snapped Sir Joshua. "At present you are incapable of any voice in the matter! I warn you."

He was arrested by the look on Mr. Essington's face.

"What!" cried that gentleman without a blush. "Haven't you heard that I have got my discharge? My dear fellow, I apologize for giving you such a shock. Yes, I'm now a sane, responsible guardian, awaiting"—he added with a smile—"your congratulations."

Sir Joshua was staring at him very hard.

"You mean to tell me seriously——"

Mr. Essington interrupted him, and there could be no doubt his feelings were injured by the suggestion of scepticism, though his air of forbearance was truly admirable under the trying circumstances.

"Do you actually imagine that I would venture into your house otherwise, and that these two honorable young people would come to bear me witness, if the fact were not as I have just explicitly stated?"

For a moment the two honorable young people began to look decidedly uncomfortable. They were relieved, however, to find that Sir Joshua seemed

to take their evidence for granted. His momentary doubt was evidently, in fact, entirely satisfied.

"I—er—I am sure I am very pleased to hear it, Francis," said he, speaking slowly, and with an eye which revealed his perplexity at this development. "But, of course, the consent of both guardians is necessary, and I—well, my views, I am afraid are somewhat different from yours."

Mr. Essington laughed genially.

"They were Horsham, I know. But, my dear old friend, we must face facts. If you searched all England, you couldn't find a more suitable husband for our dear ward than Philip Ridley: a member of one of the oldest families in the country, heir to a fine estate, one of the most brilliant men of his time at Oxford, and a first-class all-around athlete! What more could you ask?"

Where Mr. Essington had obtained these facts will probably never be known. It was certainly not by asking Philip, who presented such a picture of extreme embarrassment that his eulogist felt it advisable to finish with an explanatory addendum.

"His modesty is so great that his astonishing record has literally to be wrung out of him, which no doubt accounts for your scarcely realizing Beatrix's good fortune when the engagement was first broached to you. But that is the man, Horsham, whom our ward loves, and what are we that we should stand in the way of two young people's happiness?"

"Oh, you will consent, Sir Joshua?" cried Beatrix. "Won't you?"

Mr. Essington watched the effect of this appeal and immediately opened a fresh battery.

"I am aware," said he, dropping his voice confidentially, "that the action of a certain gentleman whom we need not name has caused a little temporary complication, but as it might be somewhat unpleasant if the details obtained

publicity, nothing more need be said once Philip and Beatrix have obtained our consent."

If Philip had been a picture of embarrassment, Sir Joshua was now a study in hesitation.

"I must think," he began.

"The thinking has already been done!" said Mr. Essington, still in a confidential voice, but now with his most charming and beneficent smile. "I have had a little talk with Harry Mason"—Sir Joshua started violently—"quite confidentially, I assure you! I gather that there is some temporary financial embarrassment in the background. Now, my dear Horsham, I have this marriage very much at heart, and in order that *all* parties may feel the same pleasure in the event, I have already given my stockbroker orders to sell out twenty-five thousand pounds' worth of stock, and that sum is at your disposal from the moment you have given your consent!"

This magnificent act of generosity produced—as can well be believed—the liveliest sensation in the three who heard it. Sir Joshua seemed divided between incredulity and joy, Philip murmured with feeling, "It's awfully good of you! But we can't really allow—" and Beatrix sprang up with very bright eyes indeed.

"Oh, Cousin Francis, you must let me give part of it! I have much more money than I need!"

"My dear girl," her guardian replied in a gentle and kindly voice, but with his back for the moment turned to his fellow guardian, and his left eye winking at her like a revolving beacon, "I also have more money than I need, and I should spend it much worse than you. It is a privilege to oblige my old friend, Sir Joshua, I assure you!"

"Do you really mean this, Francis?" inquired Sir Joshua with emotion.

"You have a blank check handy? Give it to me, together with a sheet of

note paper. When we have signed our names to our written consent to Ridley's marriage, I shall write you a check for twenty-five thousand pounds!"

"And you say you have the money actually available?" exclaimed the astounded financier, and there seemed to be in his voice a trace of doubt whether such extraordinary fortune was not too good to be true.

"No check of mine has been dishonored yet," said his benefactor with an air of calm dignity.

Unable to show her feelings by a contribution to the financial arrangements, Beatrix impulsively threw her arms round Sir Joshua's neck, and at this any doubts and any opposition which might have survived Mr. Essington's unparalleled beneficence disappeared entirely. In a few minutes the two little ceremonies were completed. Sir Joshua wrote down the specific and unqualified consent of her guardians to the marriage of Beatrix Staynes with Philip Ridley, and both in turn signed it. And then in his usual rapid manner—just as if he were addressing a post card, Beatrix thought—Mr. Essington dashed off a check for twenty-five thousand pounds.

As he handed it over with a courteous flourish and turned away from the desk, her generous heart misgave her once more.

"Are you quite sure," she whispered, "that you can really afford all that money?"

"My dear girl," he whispered back, "I'm a certified lunatic. That's a mere bit of waste paper! But don't tell Philip till you've married him! He's one of those dashed conscientious dogs. They make devilish good husbands however, I believe."

A hospitable invitation to stay to luncheon was immediately accepted by Mr. Essington for himself, but Beatrix was surprised to learn that her

junior guardian had very thoughtfully made an appointment for her early that afternoon with his dentist in Harley Street, and still more surprised to discover that this arrangement was necessary in consequence of the severe neuralgia from which she had been suffering lately. Philip was equally surprised to find that he had kindly consented to escort her up to town, and the train, they learned, started in twenty minutes, so after bidding a cordial good-by to Sir Joshua, they were escorted to their cab by Mr. Essington.

The moment he had got them apart, his manner altered in a very singular fashion.

"Jump into a cab the instant you arrive in town," he counseled urgently, "and get married in the first registrar's office you come to! Good-by and bless you both! No, don't wait to say thanks. Off with you as quick as you can!"

"But why aren't you coming with us, Cousin Francis?" asked Beatrix, with a note of disappointment which flattered her susceptible guardian exceedingly.

"My dear girl," said he, "it is probably a mere matter of hours before Mason turns up, and that permission will be canceled five minutes later, probably by wire! I propose, if possible, to extend your time limit."

"But after what you've done, we

can't let you be caught!" said Philip warmly.

"Neither can I," smiled Mr. Essington. "Good-by and good luck!"

In the sensational crash of the firm of Horsham & Stukley, which so startled the business world a few days later, the curious episode of Sir Joshua's imprisonment in the tool shed was quickly forgotten, but at the moment it mystified his staff exceedingly. According to the best available accounts, their master went out for a stroll in the park with Mr. Mandell-Essington before luncheon; Mr. Essington shortly afterward returned to stay that Sir Joshua had suddenly discovered some reason—what it was, Mr. Essington offered no opinion—for catching the first train and paying a visit to his nephew, Mr. Mason; an hour later Mr. Mason arrived in a state of considerable agitation, to be told that he had crossed his uncle en route; and soon after Mr. Mason had hastened home again Sir Joshua was discovered locked into a tool shed in the park. As for Mr. Essington, that munificent gentleman had apparently vanished into space; nor did his handsome check appear on any record of the subsequent proceedings.

But two very happy people often thought of him; and, indeed, still think of him gratefully to this day.



# The Neck: How *to* Beautify It

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

THE neck, like every other feature, should conform to the general physiognomy of the body. A short, thick neck, for instance, "sets" very beautifully upon a certain type of body, and it is extremely foolish for its possessor to envy the elongated, swanlike neck, because it seems more graceful. Grace is unquestionably a desirable quality, but grace is based fundamentally on proportion.

In women, there are several very interesting developments of the long, slender neck, some of which are very beautiful. The graceful neck, besides being long, must harmonize with the shoulders and bust as well as with the head. This is believed to denote an affable disposition. This type of neck is best exemplified in women of birth and distinction, such as the late ex-Empress Eugenie and the Empress Josephine among royalty, and Mary Anderson among stage folk. There is, too, the "neck of coquetry." It is also a graceful type, yet not necessarily stately or beautifully held. The disposition is revealed by a toss and turn, and by a forward or sidewise carriage of the head very much in evidence to-day.

The long, thin neck is not usually a graceful neck unless it is given special care. It is of that type apt to become scrawny, even stringy, as soon as adult years are reached, for those so

built are not of robust habit and suffer from dyspeptic ailments.

The short, plump neck is often very beautiful, and when conforming to a general symmetry, very graceful, too. It is never thin, because it is muscular and well filled out, soft and white, possessed of sufficient tissue to maintain its rounded outlines in comparative old age. This is termed the amative neck and is the most general type observed in the well-fed, well-cared-for American woman.

The necks of men are usually shorter, stronger, and more expressive of material qualities than those of women. Napoleon Bonaparte, for instance, was characterized by a short, sagacious neck, eloquent of inordinate selfishness and violent passions; while his consort, Josephine, of graceful mein and manners, affable, generous, and charming, displayed these qualities through the poise of her exquisitely molded neck.

The modes of the last decade have given great opportunity not only for the display of beautiful throats, but for the improvement of those who suffered from a former fashion of wearing high-necked garments and tight collars. Girls who have grown to young womanhood in the last few years will stand a better chance of possessing fully rounded, firm necks when they reach middle life than did their moth-



ers. This is not only because of the greater freedom in dress, but because constant observation of the most beautiful parts of the human frame tends to create a high ideal of beauty, and therefore the girl of this period has an unconsciously cultivated taste for the beautiful in a feature which, were we to keep the throat covered all the time, as we do the feet, would give her little, if any concern.

But to-day, every woman who values her appearance is concerned as to the condition of her neck, since it is here that the first telltale evidences of age are traced. Rare indeed is the damsel who does not give her face some kind of daily treatment, be it only to camouflage defects with rouge and powder; but beyond bathing, the neck is wholly ignored until the evidences of gross oversight manifest themselves. Then the unattractiveness is deplored and the inevitable submitted to, yet it is amazing how much can be done to transform scrawny throats, disfiguring hollows, and dry, harsh, discolored skin into firm white columns with beautifully rounded contours.

Translated into more simple terms, this means the *will* to execute and carry out with unflagging regularity, day by day, a régime combining deep breathing and massage, with nourishing creams and special neck exercises.

Just as the old Roman beauties set aside a time each day for the performance of beauty rites, so must the girl who desires to improve her neck do likewise. Ten minutes devoted to the task night and morning will in one month delight the eye with so notable a change that the task will resolve itself into a pleasure.

First, it is important that all clothing be loose and that the room be well ventilated. In order to insure the purest air and get the best results it is advisable to choose the early rising hour. Throw the windows wide open and in-

hale the fresh morning air. Set aside a stipulated length of time and perform these rites leisurely; to hurry is to frustrate one's ends.

Slowly empty and fill the lungs with pure air, holding the shoulders straight and stationary. Now slowly bring the head forward until the chin rests on the chest. Pause in this position a moment; now slowly drop the head backward until it rests on the nape of the neck. Repeat the forward and backward movements five and then ten times.

Next bend the head from the center toward the right shoulder. Guard against moving the shoulder. The muscles will be very stiff and unyielding and it may, at first, be impossible to make much headway, but persevere, force the head down as close to the shoulder as it can be coaxed, assume the upright position after a pause and press the head down toward the left shoulder. Alternate between the right and left shoulders ten times.

Now rest and inhale deeply; then resume the exercises, taking up the next one, which is twisting the head upon the neck in an effort to look over the right shoulder at an imaginary object behind.

Do not turn the body or move the shoulder; all the action is done by the head. When the twisting has reached the limit of your capacity, relax and perform the same exercise in the opposite direction, twisting over the left shoulder. Repeat these right and left twistings ten times.

Again rest, and slowly breathe in the fresh air. When the final exercise is done, this consists in unhinging the head as it were. Now allow the head to swing around in a circle as if it were a ball traveling on the edge of a hoop. If this is done very slowly, no dizziness whatever will be experienced. Describe the circle five or ten times in one direction; then alternate in the other direction.

In order to get the fullest benefit from these simple exercises it cannot be too strongly emphasized that all action must be gotten from the head and neck, and the body must be held rigid. Furthermore, if the muscles of the neck are tense—that is, if they are thrown into a state of resistance—the results will be more quickly gained.

The exercises just given will harden the muscles and help to build up a rounded column, but they are not guaranteed to overcome distressing hollows under the jawbones; nevertheless, these hollows can be filled in by using the hand as an instrument of resistance in performing the set of exercises.

For instance, bring the head forward, at the same time press back over the brow with the finger tips of one hand. Relax and allow the chin to rest on the chest; then clasp both hands behind the head, slowly force it backward against the combined resistance thus offered, until the head reaches the nape of the neck. The sidewise movement is similarly resisted by pressing the finger tips over the temple and forcing the head back as you press it onward. It is astonishing what one month's perseverance will yield if these exercises are persisted in for ten minutes twice daily.

Massage is a great aid to beauty. Massage gives and massage takes away. If it is desired to plump the throat, massage stimulates the circulation, stirs up the underlying tissue, and excites every cell it reaches into healthier action. Massage is, furthermore, a wonderful beautifier because it removes waste and effete matter. A discolored skin is always a sluggish skin, and in giving the muscles of the throat deep massage, the skin is also greatly benefited.

A desirable massage cream to be used upon the neck consists of equal parts of lanolin, cocoa butter, and sweet almond oil. These are all nourishing

fats; the combination will be found of incalculable value when properly employed upon a neck beginning to show "age."

There is a special method of giving the neck massage, and it must be properly done in order to gain sure benefits. Attention is first directed to the muscles of the chin. The backs of the hands are alternately pressed firmly under the chin. The finger tips then meet in the center as the back of one hand works upward and backward toward the ear until the hair line is reached. Both hands are in action at the same time; as the back of the left slides toward the left ear, the right hand takes its place under the chin and slides toward the right ear. This maintains forcible upward pressure throughout. The skin is cleansed and anointed repeatedly with the fattening cream during the process.

The next massage movement starts from the center of each collar bone; the cream is rubbed deeply into the skin, with long, slow upward strokes from collar bone to ear. The entire neck is then smartly slapped until the skin tingles. If the tendons have become stringy and ropy, these are now lifted in a firm grasp, rolled under the fingers, and forcibly pulled away from the underlying attachments. This grasping and rolling, and the constant application of cream, should continue for fully five minutes even though a little discomfort from the unusual shaking up is experienced; the improvement is warranted to more than make up for it.

The fifth and last movement is directed to the muscles at the back of the neck; these are grasped with the thumb and finger tips, and lifted as far away as possible from the underlying bone; then they are pressed and kneaded with the sides and heel of the hands until the skin glows.

Ninon de L'Enclos, the French

beauty who never grew old, retained the wonderful contour of her neck throughout life. An old chronicle relates that she religiously exercised it every day, and among her skin foods was the following:

Rose water .....	8 ounces
Almond oil .....	8 ounces
Tincture of benzoin.....	¼ ounce

When the skin has become yellow and acquired a dry harshness the following paste proves efficacious as a whitener and bleach:

Honey .....	1 tablespoonful
Lemon juice .....	1 teaspoonful
White of two eggs.	

Enough bran or almond meal to make a paste.

After cleansing the skin repeatedly, apply the paste with the finger tips, cover with a bandage of gauze, and allow to remain on during sleep. In the morning remove the paste with dashes of warm water followed by cold water.

The bleaching qualities of cucumber juice must not be overlooked. Cucumber creams and lotions are valuable aids and are, besides, very nourishing, as they contain one or more oils.

The bleaching virtue of cucumber juice lies in the arsenic it contains. When the neck has become almost hopelessly discolored, as may sometimes be the case, a strong arsenical bleach will prove the only remedy. Formulæ for these bleaches will be sent on application.

For routine use after the daily treatment, a whitening tonic lotion, which is also astringent, is advised. The following is a good combination:

Tincture of camphor.....	1 ounce
Tincture of benzoin.....	½ ounce
Cologne water.....	2 ounces

Daub this lotion on the skin with absorbent cotton and allow it to dry on.

An otherwise plump, pretty throat is often marred by a "double" chin. Even in very young girls one may ob-

serve the beginning in an extra fold of superfluous flesh under the chin. It is not pretty and should be vigorously combatted as soon as observed. For this purpose the "sweating out" process is effective. Heat by means of towels, wrung out of water as hot as can be borne, is applied; dry towels are laid over the wet to retain the heat; free perspiration is thereby induced. After ten minutes, slap and massage vigorously with an inert cold cream—one that does not contain fats—and finish with applications of cold water.

The astringent lotion given above is also excellent; apply on iced compresses.

An elastic chin and throat belt, by means of which the tissues in this situation can be exercised, is a splendid new idea which commends itself to every one desirous of improving herself in this direction. Information regarding it can be had on application.

Many necks have the appearance of not belonging to the body at all. In such instances, the hair and general dressing should be studied, with a view of modifying this feature. When, for instance, the neck is disproportionately long, a Directoire collar cuts off the length decidedly. A collarless frock and high coiffure aid the woman with a markedly short neck, and so on.

It has been remarked elsewhere that the neck shows evidences of age before the face; it also heralds the condition of one's health. A scrawny neck, one which displays the outlines of the bony framework, which has hollows, bespeaks a state of lowered vitality, requiring constitutional treatment. A full, firm neck is not only a lovely feature, but an indication of good health.

A painfully thin neck requires the iron-tonic powder so often mentioned in this department, plenty of nourishing foods containing vitamins, rest, and an abundance of fresh air.

When, however, through years of neglect, actual age, long illness, and the like, the neck has become hopelessly old, wrinkled, and sagging, nothing short of muscle tightening at the hands of a competent operator will restore it to "good looks."

Cosmetic surgery has reached wonderful heights in this country within the last decade. Instead of sending our clients abroad, clients are coming here from the other side for treatment.

The perpetual youth of many screen

actresses—and what is more pitiless than the camera?—demonstrates the astonishing skill of an American specialist whose clientele includes women who are of all ages and who have come from every walk of life.

If you are of this age, you must be in it. To-day the world demands youth with pulsating activity. It is well, for youth or the *spirit* of youth alone can achieve things. When a woman looks young, she feels young and is repaid for all her efforts.

## WHAT READERS ASK.

**THIRTY-FOUR.**—The red spot is probably a dilated blood vessel. You may be able to reduce this by means of witch hazel, mopped on frequently every day and allowed to dry on the skin. Brushing the spot with colodion may also help. Apply ice to the lines under the eyes. Wrap a small piece in a soft handkerchief and rub the parts gently with a stroke that begins at the inner part of the lower lid and extends to the temple. Repeat this one hundred times morning and night.

I have recently seen some cosmetic surgical work for the removal of premature, as well as older, sacks and bags under the eyes and chin. It is little short of marvelous. I will gladly put you in touch with the surgeon, who, by the way, does not advertise, but is a reputable physician-surgeon enjoying an enviable reputation here as well as abroad.

**ALMA.**—The French ointment for de-vitalizing superfluous hair is probably the only thing at our command for its safe ultimate destruction. The great French skin specialist, Professor Sabourand, worked on it for years, and latterly a scientist connected with one of our Eastern universities has perfected it. As I have so often told my readers, the action of this ointment is slow; it is not a depilatory; it does not remove the hair but slowly destroys it. Therefore, for immediate removal, I advocate a wax. Both methods can be employed at the same time. Write me for further particulars.

**ESSIE, F.**—Tonics must be applied to the brows and lashes with the greatest care, otherwise there is danger of injuring the eyes. A camel's-hair brush should be em-

ployed. Draw the lower lid down that the edges may be reached, and treat the upper lid in the same manner. Warmed lanolin and cocoa butter are excellent feeders. Also preparations containing quinine. If you desire anything further, write me again.

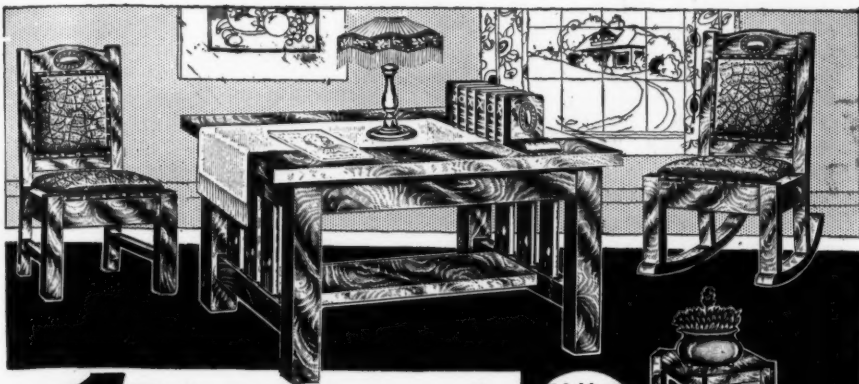
**FUSSY.**—Perhaps your shiny skin is caused by the use of soap. Try cleansing cream and meals, giving up soap altogether. Use this lotion, but not too often: Boric acid, 1 dram; distilled with witch hazel, 4 ounces. Daub on the face with absorbent cotton directly after the cleansing process.

**JASPER.**—I cannot furnish you with back numbers of the articles. If you will write me which subjects you are particularly interested in, I may be able to give you several sources of information.

**CORA.**—I strongly advise you not to use any more coloring lotions on your hair. The best treatment to restore it is vigorous massage of the scalp. This alone may be sufficient, but you may rub in crude petrolatum with profit. The object is to stimulate the circulation and improve the general health of the hair; then the color will take care of itself. There is on the market a new shampoo, containing nourishing oils which cleanse the scalp and feed the hair cells. It also gives the hair a beautiful, bright luster. Would you like to know how it can be obtained?

**JANE B.**—There is nothing to equal an arsenical bleach for restoring skin that has been repeatedly tanned and burned, but you must send to me for the formula. We never publish it.

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.



# \$1 Brings Hartman's Richly Upholstered 7 Piece Suite

Quarter-Sawn and Solid Oak

Send only \$1 for this complete suite of library, parlor, or living room furniture. Use it 30 days, on Free Trial. If you don't say that it is even more than you expected, ship it back and we return your \$1 and pay transportation charges both ways.

## Over a Year to Pay

Only by seeing this splendid quarter-sawn and solid oak suite can you realize how it will add to the appearance of your home. Only by examining it can you appreciate what a record-breaking bargain it is at our smashed price. Furniture like this can be bought nowhere else at near our price.

**Handsome Fumed Finish!** TABLE, solid oak with top 24x36 in. ARM ROCKER, solid oak with quarter-sawn top panel and rounded arm rests; seat 18x19 in. SIDE ROCKER, solid oak with quarter-sawn oak top rail, seat 16x16 in. ARM CHAIR, 37 in. high and SIDE CHAIR, 36 in. high, with seat 16x16 in. Table and chairs stand on noiseless glides. Ornamented backs and seats upholstered in durable imitation Spanish brown leather. Comfortable spring seats.

TABOURETTE, 16½ in. high with 10 in. top, is solid oak. BOOK BLOCKS, heavy enough to support a liberal number of volumes. Shipped (fully boxed, "knocked down" to lessen freight charges) from factory in Central Indiana, Western N.Y. Stator or Chicago warehouse.

Order by No. 112CCMAS. Price \$39.95. Send \$1 now. Pay balance \$3 per month.

## FREE Bargain Catalog

392 pages of the world's greatest price smashing bargains. Everything you need in Furniture, rugs, linoleum, stoves, watches, silverware, dishes, washing machines, sewing machines, aluminum ware, phonographs, gas engines, cream separators, etc.—all sold on our easy monthly payment plan and on 30 days' Free trial. Postcard or letter brings this big bargain book Free.

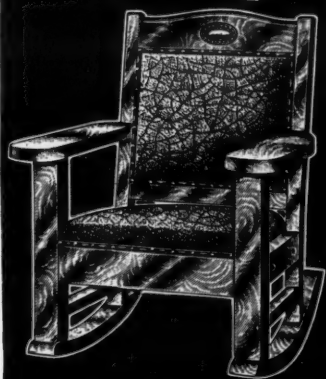
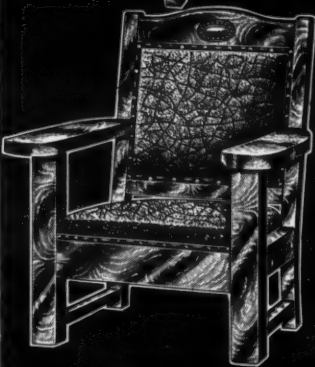
"Let Hartman Feather Your Nest!"

# HARTMAN

## Furniture & Carpet Co.

3913 Wentworth Ave., Dept. 3419 Chicago  
Copyright, 1923, by Hartman's, Chicago

Upholstered  
Back and Seats  
Comfortable Spring  
Seats



**Hartman Furniture & Carpet Co.**  
3913 Wentworth Ave., Dept. 3419 Chicago  
Enclosed find \$1.00. Send the 7-Piece Living Room Suite No. 112CCMAS as described. I am willing to have 30 days' Free trial. If not satisfied, I will ship it back and you will refund my \$1.00 and pay freight both ways. If I keep it, I will pay \$3.00 per month until the full price, \$39.95, is paid. Title remains with you until final payment is made.

Name .....

Street Address .....

R.F.D. .... Box No. ....

Town .... State ....

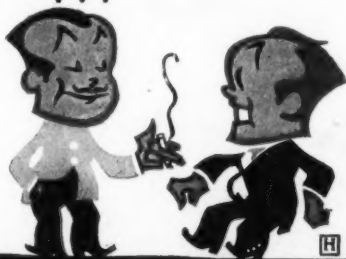
Occupation .... Color .....



## Nix on the "Parley-Voo" stuff

A FRIEND of mine.  
WHO COULDN'T speak.  
A WORD of French.  
WENT TO Paris.  
AND THE first time.  
HE HAD to get.  
A HAIRCUT and shave.  
HE PRACTICED an hour.  
MAKING SIGNS.  
IN THE looking glass.  
SO THE French barber.  
WOULD UNDERSTAND him.  
AND THEN he went in.  
AND WIGGLED his fingers.  
THROUGH HIS hair.  
AND STROKED his chin.  
AND THE barber grinned.  
AND FINISHED the job.  
THEN MY friend thought.  
HE'D BE polite.  
SO HE gave the barber.  
AN AMERICAN cigarette.

WHICH THE barber smoked.  
AND MY friend pointed.  
TO HIS mouth.  
AND SAID "Likee voo."  
AND THE barber roared.  
AND SAID "You BET.  
I USED to smoke 'em.  
WHEN I worked.  
IN INDIANAPOLIS.  
AND BELIEVE me.  
THEY SATISFY!"



HERE'S a smoke that talks in any language and needs no interpreter. Light up a Chesterfield, draw deep—and more plainly than words your smile will tell the world "They Satisfy." It's the blend that does it—and you can't get "Satisfy" anywhere except in Chesterfields, for that blend *can't be copied!*

# They Satisfy Chesterfield

## CIGARETTES

LIGGETT & MYERS TOBACCO CO.



C. R.

uf

guage  
up a  
lainly  
world  
s it—  
except  
opied!

lo

S

OBACCO C